The Science of Hatred by Mikhail Sholokhov

# NEW MASSES

September 29, 1942 15c in Canada 20

## LONG WAR— SHORT WAR?

by

## EARL BROWDER

**The "fatal ifs" that stand in the way of victory. How to save time and lives. First of five articles on "Problems of the War—and After."**

*Also in this issue: Britain X-Rays Its Leaders, by Claude Cockburn; Economics That Will Win, by the Editors; Where We Stand in the Pacific, by Colonel T.; Death of the Poll Tax? by Bruce Minton.*

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# BETWEEN OURSELVES

IT IS over a year since Alexander Bergman died — yet readers still speak often to us about his poetry which appeared in these pages. They talk as though he were still alive, recalling "that wonderful verse of Bergman's" not so much wistfully as with the deep appreciative pleasure associated with promise and expectation. There was that sort of living quality in the poems, which, sensitive as they were, gave no hint of illness. For Bergman, who spent the last five of his twenty-eight years in a sanitarium for the tubercular, broke through physical isolation to the living, fighting world outside. He did this—a superb achievement—through his writing.

This poet, who knew so well in advance that he was to die, had no fears that he would be "forgotten" in the sense that men worry about whether their fame will be kept alive after them. He never wrote for "fame." But those who knew his poetry had the earnest desire to perpetuate his memory for the meaning it has not only in literature but in the struggles of all people for life and freedom. Memorial prizes and scholarships in his name have been suggested. And one, at least, has just been established. It is a scholarship for poets who cannot afford tuition, at the Writers School of New York, and was given by a nurse at Montefiore Hospital, where Bergman died. The teacher of the Poetry Workshop course is Joy Davidman, a fellow-poet who came to know Bergman well before his death and who wrote the memorial tribute to him ("Poet of the Poor") for this magazine.

EVERY now and then we get that special little excitement derived only from reading a manuscript which can immediately be recognized as having "plenty." And that's the way we felt when we read an article by Ruscoe Clarke which is now in galley proof. It is a remarkable study of Pavlov's work—on the occasion of the ninety-third anniversary of his birth—as well as a tribute which shows a wonderful understanding of the great physiologist. The author, who appeared in NM a few weeks ago with an article on Soviet medical science, is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and a major in the British Army. His latest article will be published shortly.

Another thing we suggest you look for in a forthcoming issue is Lyle Dowling's contribution to the discussion which has been going on in these pages on inflation. Dowling, an executive assistant of the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers, has an unusually interesting approach to the whole problem he discusses.

The first of the five articles by Earl Browder which we promised you last week appears in this issue on page 4. After reading it, you will undoubtedly like being reminded that there are four more to come and that the second—on problems of the war and thereafter—appears in next week's NM.

And our forthcoming special issue on the Negro People and the War is shaping up nicely, though we can't give an exact publication date yet. One of the latest promises of an article comes from Prof. Doxey Wilkerson of Howard University, who will discuss ways to achieve the full utilization of the Negro people in war production. Langston Hughes will be represented by a new poem, this one on the Four Freedoms. Many other features of the special issue are in the making—we'll tell you more about them next week.

In the way of fiction we have secured for publication a large chunk of Arnold Manoff's novel, *Telegram from Heaven*, which has just been issued. It's a very fine novel altogether, as Alvah Bessie makes plain in his review of the book (page 26) in this issue.

IN COMMON *with millions of other* patriotic Americans we on NM weep for the Dodgers. At this writing our unhappy warriors still have a mathematical chance to win, but this is one case where mathematics seem to be stacking the Cards. In this solemn hour we don't think it's in especially good taste to ask: how did it happen? or to emphasize too strongly the fact that on August 4 the Dodgers had a ten-game lead and were coasting blithely toward the pennant. All that were better passed over in silence. During the past weekend one of our editors made a scouting trip north of the Bronx and discovered that the tragedy of the Dodgers has become a great bond drawing together men and women of all classes, creeds, and political beliefs, a powerful instrument of national unity (excluding, of course, the benighted citizens of St. Louis). *Let us carry on, firm in our faith that* there will always be a Brooklyn.

THREE NM staff members are going back to school this fall—as teachers. Joseph North will conduct a course on "Practical Writing" and Joseph Starobin on "Key Problems of American Foreign Policy" at the Workers School; while Barbara Giles will teach "Article Writing" at the Writers School, which is conducted by the League of American Writers. Both schools have keyed their courses to the war, and offer some exceptionally interesting studies. The Workers School, which is located at 35 East 12th St., NYC, opens its fall term October 5, and the Writers School (13 Astor Place, NYC) on September 30. Registration is now going on.

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# Everyman's Battle

***The crisis that can be resolved by attacking Hitler's rear now. An editorial.***

VERY much like the bitter battle for Stalingrad the struggle for the second front is by no means a foregone conclusion. The issue is by no means decided, just because some newspapers tell us so and powerful forces would have it so.

WHAT did the newspaper dispatches from London, the editorials of the New York *Times* tell us? They said we had better stop demanding a second front. They said it is up to the military men, a matter for next year. They said that there was a real difference with the USSR; Churchill and Stalin had disagreed. They said it would be too rash to do anything about it. They said there would be losses.

But the very clever and very anonymous men in London and Washington who tipped off the newspapermen and the editorialists have misjudged the moment. As the full significance of spinelessness, thin-bloodedness, downright treachery begins to sink into public consciousness, the most alert and most sensitive forces of every different shade of opinion and viewpoint are making themselves heard. October is at hand. It is very late. We are back up against the river of time that is flowing out. But the second front movement is not so easily crushed because it is after all a movement that speaks for the millions, and speaks with full responsibility in the best interests of our nation's future, and the cause of victory over the enemy.

WE ARE told that the issue must be left to the military men, who, we are assured, are against it. But take a statement from one of our military men, Maj.-Gen. Russell P. Hartle, as quoted in the New York *Sun* last week. *The striking fact about this interview was that the major-general was definitely receptive to the second front.* In his opinion, the men were ready for it. If they could vote in north Ireland, "they'd vote for the offensive tomorrow." And maybe it would be worth it. Losses, yes, but it "might shorten the war by two years." Thus, the major-general's attitude is a reflection of the fact that he—like all military men—knows that the question must be decided by the higher-ups: in essence, *it must be a political decision.* Who can deny that the loss of two army corps today—100,000 men—is worth it, if it will save us twenty army corps next April and shorten the war two years.

WE ARE told that a crisis has arisen between ourselves and Russia. Stalin and Churchill did not speak the same language. The Russians—like the rest of the world—were led to expect a second front. But, "So sorry. A slight misunderstanding about the language of the communique of June 11." Very well. If such a crisis exists, what shall intelligent people do about it? Obviously, *they must work to resolve it.* They must not let it be deepened. Have we not learned the lesson of the thirties? Were not Spain, Czechoslovakia, France, most of Europe sacrificed precisely because of the disunity in the democratic camp, which in the last analysis was a failure to unite and stay united with the Soviet Union?

WAS there a pledge to open a front in June. Yes, there was. Was it just a question of a pledge for the sake of mollifying Molotov when he was here in May? No, as a matter of fact, when Churchill came over after Molotov left a solemn declaration was issued, on June 26, in which it was promised to "divert German forces from Russia?"

The fact is that there were three pledges. One was made in May, a second in June, and the President spoke of "decisions" which had been made at the end of July. And it was not a pledge to the Russians, or for the sake of the Russians. It was a pledge by our own trusted leaders, a pledge to the peoples of our own country and Britain. That is the record.

The longer the delay, the more brazenly do the defeatists among us attempt to rewrite the past and speculate on the future. It was good to see the Royal Air Force bombing the city of Munich last week, almost to the day four years after the Munich betrayal. But as the fires burn in Munich, the wraiths of Munichism, not yet buried, still stalk among us.

IN THE desperation with which it champions "no-second-front-now," the New York *Times* goes to the length of insinuating that the Communists are the only ones that are excited about this matter, and they imply that the industrial workers are opposed to "petitions" and second front demands.

But the truth is, as the *Times* full well knows, that the working people of this country have been in the forefront of the campaign, yes, unions like the United Automobile Workers, with 900,000 men in the war industries, and unions like the UE, with 500,000 in the war industries, unions like the National Maritime Union, whose members have to carry the weapons of war abroad. And there is in fact no divergence at all between those 500 writers and artists who joined with the League of American Writers last week to demand a second front, and the interests of the industrial working class. On the contrary, we have here a precious example of unity.

The *Times* has also gotten the full answer to its ill-concealed Red-baiting. For some of the most powerful voices for immediate action came last week from circles who cannot possibly be considered Communist. And the fact that the Communists are speaking up boldly on this issue—alongside of all these other voices—is in itself proof that the issue of the second front is a *national* issue, an issue in which only the interests of the country are at stake, and no other.

Samuel Grafton in the New York *Post* has seized the problem frankly. Dorothy Thompson likewise, for the second or third time in a month. The *New Republic,* in its editorial last week, reflects the dismay of all honest and intelligent forces in the country at the way things are going. Dean Alfange, American Labor Party gubernatorial candidate in New York, Charles Poletti, lieutenant-governor—these are among the latest to make themselves heard. Thomas Lamont, of the J. P. Morgan Co., a spokesman for capitalist circles to be sure, chose this particular week in which to publish a three-column letter in the Sunday *Times* rebuking those who are forever casting aspersions on our relations with Russia. He did not come out for a second front in so many words. But appearing in this particular week, Mr. Lamont's letter exerts a powerful impetus for overcoming the crisis in our relations with the Soviet Union and going forward to a higher level of mutual understanding and alliance. The second front is the concrete expression of that higher level.

THE second front is a military, political, psychological issue combined. It is a question of whether the war shall go forward in a vast, democratizing advance, knitting all allies closer, inspiring our own and friendly peoples, galvanizing every phase of the home front, arousing the bleeding millions of Europe and Asia, breaking the backbone of the Axis. It is the issue that expresses all the healthy, vigorous, forward-looking, forthright instincts of all the elements of our population that really want victory. And because it is such an issue, it will not be hushed. It will not be downed. It will reconquer street by street. It will fight back, this second front campaign; it will gain reserves. To rouse the people to the nation's danger, that is the supreme and overshadowing task of the hour.



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# LONG WAR—SHORT WAR?

***Earl Browder on the "fatal ifs" that stand in the way of victory. How to save time and lives. The first of a series of five articles on the problems of the war—and after.***

THERE is a continuous public debate on the question whether this is to be a long war or a short war. Despite a certain confusion involved in such a formulation, we may take the question as the starting point for discussion, in the course of which we can get closer to the real issues.

For the United Nations, the military objective is the destruction of the Axis regimes and the establishment of such succession-regimes as will provide the guarantee against a revival of the policy of aggression. Nothing short of this result is victory.

How long the war is to be, therefore, depends upon how much time is required to win the victory. Those who discuss the question in any other terms are really victims of a hidden defeatism.

Policy, diplomatic and military as well as domestic, must subordinate every consideration to victory at the earliest possible moment—to make the war as short as possible, as the only means of minimizing defeatist influences and the cost in human life and accumulated resources. At the same time our country and the United Nations as a whole must be prepared to conduct the war as long as may be necessary for victory—to be morally and materially prepared for the possibility of a long war.

We will make the war shorter, to the extent that we gather all our forces and throw them into the scales of battle. We will make the war longer with every delay we permit.

THE debate on a long or short war is thus not a debate with words but a debate conducted on the one hand in terms of the energy with which we gather all forces and throw them into the struggle—the strongest and only final "argument" for a short war—and on the other, by the extent to which we permit "politics-as-usual" and "business-as-usual" to obstruct, weaken, and undermine the war effort—the "argument" which effectively prolongs the war and makes it more costly.

Nothing but confusion can arise from any debate on the question of "A Short War or a Long One," unless we fully understand that *the issue depends upon what we do from this moment on.* We will decide the question by the way we act, as a nation, as groups, and individually. The war is being fought out, therefore, in each and every act and word, and even in every thought of each American, his group, and his nation as a whole. The sum and result of all our acts, words, and thoughts will decide whether we Americans, as a nation, *have the ability to make the war a short one.*

The determination, courage, perseverance, patience, energy, as well as all other capacities and abilities of our country, are put to the test by the war. Above all is being tested our ability to think straight—the most difficult test of all.

We, Americans as a nation, have hardly begun to think as yet about some of the most fundamental questions of this war. How are we going to halt the mounting tide of Axis victories when we have hardly begun to understand how the Axis won those victories? We are still thinking narrowly, in fragments, about this or that small aspect or problem of the war, not realizing or forgetting that a global war requires "global thinking" on the part of everyone who is seriously determined to affect its outcome.

The production of armaments, the mobilization of the nation's economy to the single end of war, is clearly a basic requirement of victory, and the speed of mobilization is a basic factor in determining whether the war shall be short or long. This is perhaps the most widely appreciated and understood factor of war policy. I have no desire to minimize its importance; and in later articles will speak of war production and broader economic problems at some length. But at this early stage of my discussion, it is necessary to emphasize above everything else that *armaments, even overwhelming superiority in armaments, are not enough for an early victory.*

I know of nothing which can so completely drive home this truth as the simple fact, too often forgotten, that Germany, the keystone and stronghold of Axis world power, was ten years ago a disarmed and helpless nation, and her present Axis partners, Japan and Italy, were second-rate powers struggling with economic crises and relying upon American help. The United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union, now the core of the United Nations, together with France, now Hitler's helpless victim, ten years ago possessed or controlled fully ninety percent of the world's effective military striking power. But in less than ten years, that relation of military forces has been transformed so drastically that Germany has crushed every military force in Europe, except the Red Army, and with Italy is threatening Suez and the Near East, while Japan has occupied practically all the Far East except Australia and Eastern Siberia, and the Axis seriously threatens world conquest. If military power were all-decisive, the Axis could never have arisen. This is a truth of the most profound consequences, most of which Americans are only beginning to learn. It must never be forgotten. Its lessons contain the answers to all problems involved in whether we must fight a short war or a long one.

Long War



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Today, in the midst of life-and-death war, global war which will determine the fate of mankind for generations, we are repeating most of the mistakes of policy, in one or another form, which over ten years built up the nonentity Hitler to the threatening world conqueror. We have not learned the lessons yet, except partially and incompletely. And if we do not learn them well, then at best the war will be a long, difficult, and most disastrous one.

We are repeating a basic mistake of the past when we console ourselves that after all the United States is potentially as powerful as the rest of the world put together, and that if necessary we can lick Hitler by ourselves "with one hand tied" as the traditional American boast puts it. This spirit of smug complacency, not so voluble since Pearl Harbor, is still the confirmed habit of thought of too many men in positions of power and influence, all the more potent when unconscious. We had better accustom ourselves to the thought that until we drastically cut out the mistakes of the past ten years which brought catastrophe upon us and the world, cut them out root and branch, it is entirely possible that America will be licked, and licked shamefully. And then it will not matter much whether the war is short or long.

Defeat in this war for America, let us never tire of repeating, will not be simply a "deplorable incident" in our history. It will be the end of the history of the United States of America. Future historians, in such an event, after humanity had painfully climbed out of Nazi slavery and attained civilization again, would speak of the USA as a "brilliant experiment" which lasted less than two centuries, full of promise and hope, but which was finally destroyed by a fatal inability of its leaders to think deeply enough to meet its supreme crisis, even though it held every material necessity in its hands. It is necessary to recognize this shameful possibility, in order that we may rouse every American to the exertion of all his powers, mental, moral, and physical, to make such an end of our history impossible, to organize America's powers to the full and throw them into the scales of battle while victory is still possible.

The will to victory, the subordination of everything to victory, must be made the starting point for the understanding of those policies which alone can bring victory.

For the earliest possible victory, the policies required are those which will most effectively accomplish the following aims:

*1. The unity of the nation, the conscious collaboration of the great majority of the people, and of all important groups, in the maximum exertion of all the force of the nation; this is sometimes spoken of under the term "civilian morale."*

*2. The closest and firmest unity with the fighting allies of our country, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and China, and the consolidation of the United Nations around this alliance.*

*3. The winning of new allies, the recruitment of new forces against the Axis, in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the calling up of all possible reserves in the fight.*

*4. The full mobilization of American industry, as of all the United Nations, and its economy, including agriculture, to produce everything needed for victory in the war.*

These objectives of policy, here stated in their most general form, are interconnected and interdependent. They are equally necessary for victory, and the speed and thoroughness with which they are realized will determine whether the war will be short or long.

As set forth above, in their most general form, these aims of policy would arouse little objection or controversy. Everyone but a conscious enemy of the United States is eager, or at least willing, to see these aims achieved if—the fatal "if"—it is done on the terms considered satisfactory to him. What man is not eager to see national unity—if the nation unites on his own terms? And who objects, or could object, to the other nations uniting with the United States if they took the terms of unity entirely from us? And so on. Thus easily does agreement upon general aims dissolve at the first touch into the most fierce controversy over the means of achieving them.

The fatal "if" that stands as an obstacle to working out concrete policies which will achieve the preconditions of victory can only be overcome and dissolved by setting against it another "if"—*if* we are *slow* in getting general agreement on effective policies the war will be long and costly; *if* we *fail* to get agreement we will be destroyed as a nation and enslaved as a people.

The stern requirements of survival, the iron laws of military necessity, drive us to submerge our differing and even antagonistic interests and ideas in an agreement which has but one single criterion—will it help increase the striking power of our nation and its allies, will it help win the war in the shortest possible time?

Under the hammer blows of military disasters we achieved our first big steps in the establishment of policy in the spirit here indicated, in the Anglo-Soviet-American alliance, and the United Nations Pact. It will be sad, indeed, if we are to require a new disaster to push us into each new step—that would be a long and bloody road to victory, unnecessarily long and unnecessarily bloody.

Short War — Michaels.

EFFECTIVE war policy can be established in one of two ways: the Nazi way is the terroristic dictatorship over the nation by a small minority of ruthless men ruling everything in their own interest by force and violence; the other, the democratic way, is to adjust policy to the proved interests and ideas of the majority of the people and to every important and necessary group, carefully limiting the field in which such policy must be *imposed* against opposition ("democratic dictatorship") to the smallest possible number of the incurables who persist against all suasion in setting their particular interests above the interests of the nation.

We have powerful interests and spokesmen



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in the United States who are enamoured of the Nazi way of doing things, and who want to move our country in that direction. For example, ex-President Herbert Hoover recently advocated as a "war measure" that we copy "Nazi economics." But what is this thing he calls "Nazi economics"? It is built on slave labor, the only distinctive thing about Nazi economics, slave labor of Germans, a triple slavery for the conquered peoples. There is little doubt that Mr. Hoover meant by his proposal that the United States must move away from the democratic method in the direction of the Nazi slave system. The fact that he calls it "economics," an inoffensive word, to cover up its offensive meaning, need not blind us to the dangerous implications of such a proposal, its character as a subversion of the whole war effort of the American nation, its sabotage of victory. Or, for a further example, we can note the tendency represented by Congressman Smith of Virginia (with perhaps a majority of Congress) to deal with labor in the war by means of drastic legislative crippling of the trade union movement—fully in the spirit of Herbert Hoover.

FORTUNATELY for the prospects of victory and a short war, President Roosevelt has not surrendered to these forces or their ideas. It is possible to proceed in the democratic way in the hammering out of our national policy for victory.

Unfortunately for the prospects of victory and a short war, our national thinking as reflected in the newspapers is in the most chaotic, contradictory, confused condition imaginable. Even after the master strategy of the United Nations has been clearly laid down in the Anglo-Soviet-American pacts announced June 11, there is still no general move to revise in harmony with this master plan the thousand minor policies, our daily habits of work, our thoughts and prejudices, all of which are the substance of our national life and effort. Our habits, prejudices, minor policies, still contradict and obstruct our war policy in myriad ways, because they were formed upon the basis of misinformation and lack of knowledge, upon completely false ideas as to who were friends and who enemies, who were strong and who weak. We have corrected the main policy, but we have not begun to bring everything else in line with it. There is a sharp time-lag in our national thinking.

At the very moment I am writing this page, an interesting example of this time-lag in thinking passes before my eyes as I look over the editorial page of the New York *Times* of July 13. One of the most responsible columnists, Anne O'Hare McCormick, nonchalantly remarks in the course of an objective analysis of the role of Turkey in the war, that: *"From the outset of hostilities it can be said of the Turks that they recognized the war for what it is, a contest for world empire."*

Innumerable "slips" of this kind in public thinking reflect the much more important "slips" in policy and action which continue. What all this means, in short, is that while

we have officially recognized that "the age of imperialism is ended," we still go on thinking and acting upon the assumption that this war is still "a contest for world empire." We are conducting the People's War of National Liberation in too many respects still as though it were on our side also a war for empire. We too often act on the assumption that the proclaiming of virtuous war aims is all we need to change the character of the war, which continues to be fought with the same methods and policies as before.

THE truth to which we must return again and again, which is the central truth for winning the war, is the fact that if we conduct this war as an imperialist war we are already defeated hopelessly. We cannot win this war except by arming and uniting all the peoples to fight for their own freedom and independence. This character of the war is not something which will come as the *result of victory*, but on the contrary *victory will come as the result of fighting this kind of war.*

It is not easy to revise and correct our national prejudices and habits of thought and work so fundamentally.

That is only another way of saying that it is not easy to destroy the Axis and win victory.

If it were an easy problem to solve, it would have been done before we got around to discussing it. Only the most difficult problems arouse our most sustained and valuable efforts.

We know that this problem will be solved, because it must be solved to save the United States and the world from slavery. Necessity is the mother, not only of invention, but of new policies and new thinking for entire nations.

We will make this war as short as possible, bring victory at the earliest moment, by realizing quickly such effective agreement on policies which will unite the mass of American people and all important groupings in enthusiastic effort and sacrifice; which will unite us with our allies and potential allies in solid bonds of mutual confidence and collaboration; which will solve the problems of maximum utilization of United States economy for victory.

That means, in other words, that the speed with which victory comes is directly proportional to the speed with which we transform all our thought, action, policy, to bring it into full harmony with the character of the war as the continuation of the "peoples' revolution," i.e., the People's War of National Liberation.

If we accomplish this but slowly, then we must resign ourselves to a long and disastrous war. If we fail to accomplish it completely, we go down to Nazi slavery.

That, in short, is the nub of the debate on "A Short War or a Long One?"

EARL BROWDER.

## The Sealed Train

The wheels begin with the guns, blast by blast the shaft revolves
Like a world turning: the sealed train shudders and is motion.
Far out on the saddest farm they hear the whistle; it falls distantly
And closes upon the cities; on all battlefields sharply cuts explosions.

It shatters the hiding place; no mine is deeper, no mill
Louder than the moving iron. Men dying see it hurtle by;
Men in action feel the wind of their time usefully torn.

The border police are clamped to the watched edges of the nations,
The revolvers open like mouths: what passenger, what freight is passing through?
. . . the darkened train rolls on, no lantern admits man's separateness or lawful edge.

*(one April a tangible train was unsealed:*
*taller than a hundred divisions, the exile emerged in his land)*
The wounded, the unwounded, the heroes and the blind are racing in metal
Swifter than interceptors; the exiles are more durable than tanks.
These wheels are thunder above bombs, these curves are taken
At tension beyond weakness to endure. The green lights are blown down,
In apparent darkness we are dispatched to the unvisited lands.
Yet the great seal will be broken, the headlight flame, the suns rise in the windows;
The train will arrive exactly as the station clock strikes time.

DON GORDON.



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THE WEEK in LONDON by CLAUDE COCKBURN

# BRITAIN X-RAYS ITS LEADERS

***The country's reaction to the Churchill speeches. How public anxiety over the delay in the second front expresses itself. Cripps thinks about his future.***

*London (by wireless)*

DURING the brief parliamentary recess the British political situation presents a peculiarly confusing picture. The last session of Parliament fizzled unpleasantly. As though the feeble reactions to Churchill's recent report haven't been enough, we had his depressing and even disastrous speech on India. This has resulted in an atmosphere of great dissatisfaction with Parliament in some quarters which combines with the rising exasperation—and in some cases sheer cynicism—induced by the delay in opening a second front. This latter is the factor which, as the battle of Stalingrad mounts to greater heights, dominates the entire scene.

It is this which prevents people who would otherwise be throwing themselves 100 percent into every possible war activity, from full realization of our real needs. It is now certainly no exaggeration to say that the delay in the second front and the failure to respond to the most obvious demands of the situation are acting as a gravely debilitating force on British politics and the war effort.

It is against this background that the situation during the parliamentary recess has to be seen. For many people are at last beginning to actively believe that the question of the second front is above all not a military but a political question. There was immediate response in British factories to a recent article in the Soviet press bluntly declaring that no sophistication was required but only simple common sense to understand the need for a second front; and there was instant applause for the Soviet press declaration that Munichism is still the real factor in the delay.

THAT is why you get the extraordinary contrast between the apparent nervelessness of Parliament and the state of excitement and determination in the country. There is no doubt that throughout the country the demand is rising sharply for the immediate solution of whatever difficulties are holding up the development of the second front. Probably there was a certain relaxation in this demand immediately following Churchill's return from Moscow. If anyone on the basis of surveys of public opinion which are regularly made were to suppose that this implied a slackening of determination, he would be entirely misinterpreting the situation. The "lull" which occurred was the result simply of the belief that now at last some final and favorable decision must have been taken. Now what is taking place here is the bursting out of the popular will, demanding that there be some immediate proof that the people were not deceived in their previous expectations.

It would be possible to list an enormous number of urgent statements, resolutions, and demands by trade union leaders, by factory meetings, and by mass meetings of citizens showing the new anxiety with which this question is being regarded. I will quote only two very different examples. Last week Will Lawther, president of the Miners Federation of Great Britain, in a special message to the London *Daily Worker,* expressed his view in favor of the urgency of a second front on behalf of the miners. This he has done much more emphatically now than he had some weeks previously at the miners' conference and a few days later in Trafalgar Square. Lawther is, to say the least, a cautious man in such respects. But he, like other trade unionists, felt at the Trade Union Congress the full force of working class demand on this issue. Equally, at the TUC, they could not help noting that for the first time in more than a decade something really new was happening which, without going into elaborate analysis here, could be expressed by saying that the strength of the most advanced workers in the entire British war machine was able to make itself felt, as against the old and now obviously rickety apparatus of Transport House [headquarters of the TUC]. It was making itself felt, above all, in the direction of a far more rigorous war effort for offensive action.

Another example occurred spectacularly last week in the bailiwick of the late Neville Chamberlain, at Birmingham. Here the Lord Mayor was besieged morning, afternoon, and evening by great deputations representative of Birmingham factories—led, for the most part, by shop stewards. They demanded that within the next few days Birmingham should officially celebrate a "Stalingrad Day" and that this day should be taken as the symbol and pledge of the determination of the city's workers to secure the opening of a second front, the immediate relief of the Red Army at Stalingrad, the removal of all governmental obstacles for the swift destruction of Hitlerism.

Obviously the situation expressed by such manifestations is more serious, more urgent than ever in the now deplorably long history of the fight for the full implementation of the United Nations strategy. With this as a central note of the situation, the Premier's statement on India and the resulting repercussions in India itself have contributed seriously to public anxiety and uneasiness. The position momentarily is that Churchill, Leopold Amery [Secretary of State for Colonies], and a relatively small section of Conservatives have isolated themselves by their extremism.

Naturally there are those who greedily pounce upon this fact as an opportunity to push forward their vendetta against the Prime Minister. These are elements who are certainly less interested in securing an advance in India than in scoring points or even sticking pinpoints into the Premier. That Churchill has a blind spot about India is no secret. Equally, Churchill is highly experienced and in some ways a surprisingly sensitive politician. He would, if sufficiently strong positive opposition to his India policy were presented on an agreed basis by members of all parties, almost certainly bow to the inevitable.

IT IS absolutely certain that the basis for such an agreed policy exists. The organization of it depends in the first place on the Labor Party. On this issue the Labor Party has not yet clarified a position which is supportable. Clement Attlee does not deny that he sat up late nights with Churchill agreeing to the wording of the Premier's statement. Arthur Greenwood, on the other hand, has clearly disapproved the tone of the statement.

As for Cripps, he is at this writing reported to be in temporary retirement apparently thinking over his future and, it is to be hoped, his immediate past. Some of his friends—and these are by no means exclusively persons of great political responsibility—keep suggesting he may resign at any moment. Some of them—those connected with the curious grouping which calls itself "Commonwealth"—suggest that Cripps is about to quit the Cabinet in order to align himself with this group, along with such personalities as Sir Richard Acland and Tom Wintringham. Perhaps this story is based only on the assumption that Sir Stafford may have some kind of Freudian desire to climb back into something like the original leftist groupings with which he was associated years ago. On the other hand, the only sign of life so far given by Cripps is a statement about the reasons for the breakdown of his negotiations in India, of which the most charitable thing one can say is that Sir Stafford's vivid memory of this event seems to have improved rather than to have blurred with the passage of time. He now states positively and in sharp detail things which, on his return, he offered to his friends as mere surmises.



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# WHERE WE STAND IN THE PACIFIC

***Some fallacies in Ambassador Grew's ideas. The differences between Japanese and German military strength. An analysis of the fighting in New Guinea.***

IN A SPEECH in Syracuse last week, the US Ambassador to Japan, Joseph C. Grew, declared that Japan is our most formidable enemy, "far tougher than Germany." He said that the Germans cracked in 1918 and would crack again, but that the Japanese would fight until completely crushed. He agreed with those who believe that German morale would not survive a series of setbacks and added: "The Japanese will not crack. They will not crack morally or psychologically or economically even when eventual defeat stares them in the face —only by utter physical destruction or utter exhaustion of their men and materials can they be defeated." Ambassador Grew affirms that he knows both the Germans and the Japanese well, having spent ten years in each of these countries. He "came out [of Germany] on the last train with my chief, Ambassador Gerard . . . in 1917," and says: "The Germans cracked in 1918. I have steadfastly believed and I believe today that *when the tide of battle turns against them,* as it assuredly will turn, they will crack again." (My emphasis.)

First of all the ambassador makes the capital mistake of considering that the Germany of the first world war days is the same as the Germany which is fighting the second world war. The fact that Ambassador Grew "came out on the last train" in 1917 has absolutely nothing to do with his knowledge of the Germany of Hitler. The manpower, raw material, and industrial resources of the kaiser's Germany were incomparably smaller than those of Hitler's Germany. Its strategic *place d'armes* was only a fraction of what it is today. It had a war on two fronts on its hands, while today it has to face only one way—because where French, British, and American armies stood in 1917 and 1918, all that threatens Germany is "decisions on the urgency of the tasks of opening a second front, etc. . . ."

Germany cracked in 1918 because Germans did not have enough to eat and had no hope of obtaining more. Today gentlemen like Ambassador Grew with their unfortunate statements give them hope of getting even more than they have today, by delaying the opening of a second front in Europe in 1942. The methods of delaying this opening are extremely varied. *One of them is to underestimate Germany and blow up Japan as the "toughest enemy."*

DISREGARDING statistics as to territory, population, raw materials, and industrial power, Ambassador Grew attempts to prove that Japan is stronger because it "believes in Shintoism" and all that sort of thing, forgetting that Hitler Germany also has its own "Shintoism." In addition to its brand of Shintoism, it has 320,000,000 people at its command, a territory many times superior to that of Japan and, in contrast with Japan, has that territory practically all in one block, instead of a complex patchwork of pieces and strips scattered over the whole Western Pacific. And, as if sensing the fallacy of his reasoning and the lopsidedness of his comparison, Ambassador Grew slips in a condition for Germany's collapse—"when the tide of battle turns against them." To this we can reply that Japan will collapse, too, when the tide of battle turns against it. So the thing is to see where the tide must be turned first.

For a year we have been repeating unswervingly and stubbornly to the point of monotony that this should be done by invading Europe, crushing Germany, and then taking care of Japan with the combined forces of the United Nations. There is no use explaining our viewpoint on that score again. It might be added, though, that our tasks in the Pacific, in the framework of this scheme, should of necessity be preventive and defensive, consisting mainly of holding the Japanese to the west of the line Dutch Harbor-Midway-Samoa-Fiji-Solomons-New Guinea; while on the Asiatic continent we do our utmost to reinforce the main land force we have on our side against Japan —the Chinese army—with what they need most—bombers which can be flown there under their own power (via Tokyo, for instance) and whatever fighters we can get there by the roundabout route (via India). This job seems to be underway to a certain extent and the successes of the Chinese armies in Chekiang and Kiangsi in August were certainly partly due to such assistance in the air.

The main power of Japan is, of course, its army. The navy is but secondary. Imagine for a moment that the thirty Japanese divisions in China are crushed by Chiang Kai-shek and that the fifty Japanese divisions in Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and Korea are held back by the Soviet Far Eastern armies. What can the Japanese navy do then? How long can it hold sway over the patchwork of Japanese conquests in the Pacific without continental backing? Not long. Japan, as any other country, could not resist without its army, and its army is *on the continent,* in China, Indo-China, Burma, and Manchuria, with driblets scattered over the islands of the southwest Pacific. The decision must come on the Asiatic continent.

THE war we are waging against Japan at present has several phases.

One: We are trying to keep the Japanese battle fleet within the bounds of our forward defense line (as defined above) while trying to entice it into battle within the canopy of our land-based planes. The battles of the Coral Sea, Midway, and the Solomons were all part of this phase, which so far has been successful.

Two: We are doing everything possible to protect our life line to Australia and India. The various task-force raids on islands of the Pacific since last January, the recent raid on Makin, and the Solomon operation are part of this task.

Three: We have to protect Australia itself—although this devolves mostly to British and Australian forces with the cooperation of the American air force. The fighting in New Guinea is the mainstay of this objective.

All these phases of our war effort are defensive in character.

Finally—four: We are conducting a sustained submarine campaign against Japan's lines of communications well within the area of her temporary Pacific domain. This is an offensive phase.

There is also a phase which at this juncture might be called "hopeful" or, better still, "imaginary." The Solomon Islands operation, besides belonging to the protective phase, may by a



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stretch of the imagination be made to belong to that "grand offensive" phase. This phase is the so-called "island-hopping" offensive which is supposed to have started at Tulagi with Tokyo as its final, albeit very distant, objective. Its stages are expected to be Buka, Rabaul, Kavieng, Truk, and Guam, from where it might bifurcate along two lines—Yap-Palau-Luzon-Formosa and Marianas-Bonin-Japan proper.

Now there is not the slightest doubt that the US Marines have done and are doing the best possible job soldiers can do. In spite of the swivel chair critics of American aircraft, US fliers have downed Japanese fliers at a ratio of 5:1. And still the Solomon operation has lasted for more than six weeks and is not complete yet. Thus it would seem that the "island-hopping" grand offensive is less than in an embryonic stage and at this rate it would take not months, but probably years. We are nibbling with tiny fragments of forces. How many marines can there be in the Solomons? Not many, because, very unfortunately, there are very few marines in this man's army anyway. They usually operate in battalions, not in divisions and army corps at the skirt of the Japanese *place d'armes*. The nibbling is not one-sided. Tulagi and Guadalcanal were brilliantly taken by American forces. Japanese counter-attacks were repulsed. An important aerial battle was won by us over Guadalcanal. Quite recently part of the Japanese battle fleet was kicked in the pants by Flying Fortresses and forced to the north.

BUT in New Guinea the Japanese continue to advance on Port Moresby. This is their fifth attempt. They tried it from Lae, they advanced from Buna, they attempted to take it in reverse, from the Coral Sea, they struck at Milne Bay, and now again they are trying from Buna with much more success. They were permitted somehow to cross the Owen Stanley Mountains under almost impossible conditions and they have now irrupted into the valley leading to Port Moresby, advancing to within thirty miles of the city. An amazing admission was made by someone somewhere in Australia: it appears that Allied troops in New Guinea are "beginning to imitate Japanese tactics of infiltration." Why it should have taken so many months to "imitate" the Japanese—when Marshal Timoshenko laid down the principles of "counterfiltration" publicly in 1940—is anybody's guess. Up in the Aleutians desultory warfare is being waged undecisively from the air.

All this is nothing but "plugging the dam" before the Japanese flood. Except for the work of the US Navy it is all a small war. This writer does not wish to venture to advocate anything else. But let us not imagine for a moment that this is a major effort and that we can shun responsibility for aggressive action on the only decisive front—in Europe, on land, in 1942.

The fighting marines hunting Japanese troops in the thick underbrush of the Solomon Islands.



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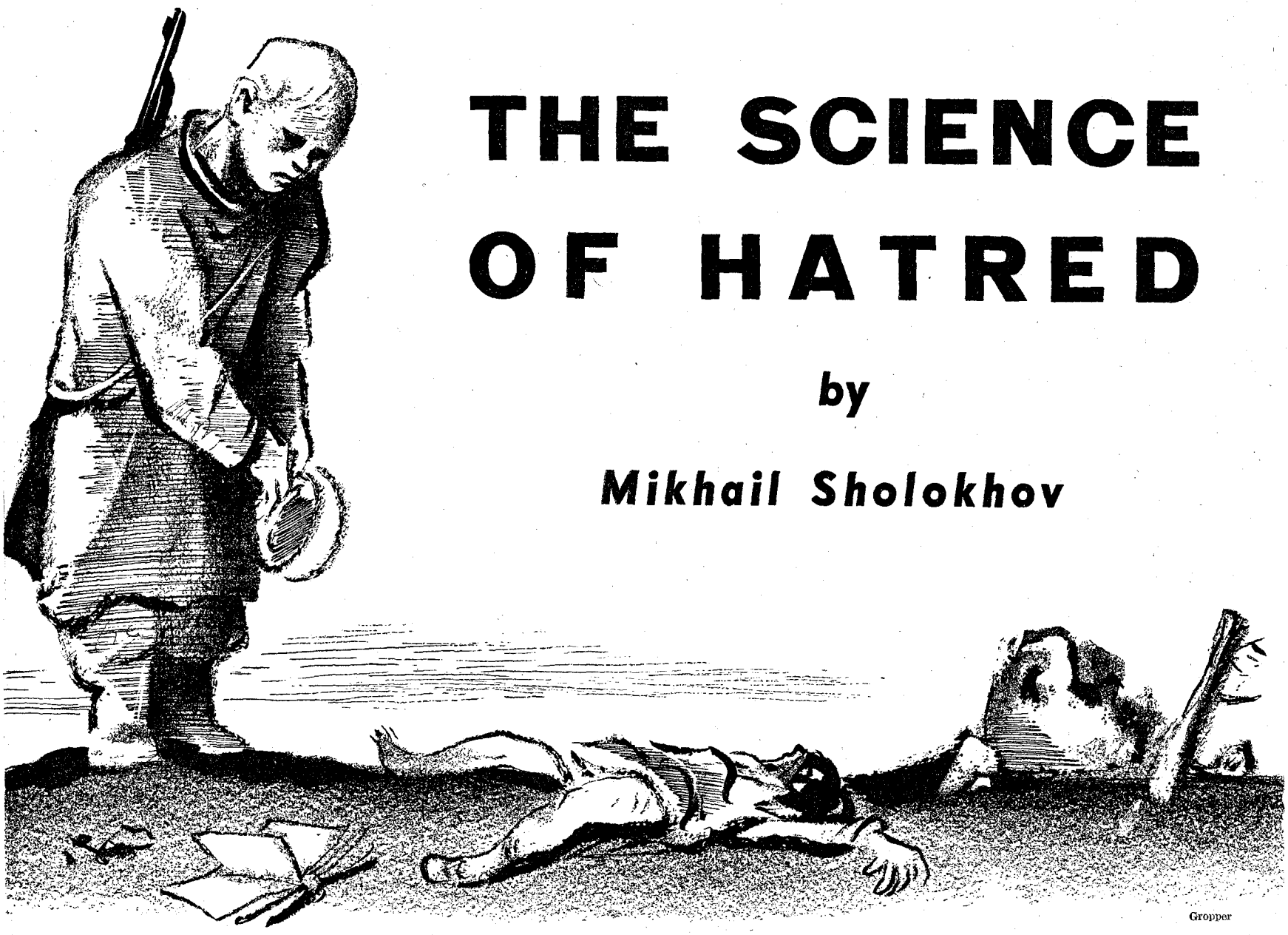
# THE SCIENCE OF HATRED

by

**Mikhail Sholokhov**



Gropper

*This is what the enemy did to a Red Army lieutenant. "I couldn't die lying down . . . the Germans would stand watching and laughing. . . ." Illustrations by William Gropper.*

*"It is impossible to vanquish the enemy unless you learn to hate him with all the strength of your heart and soul."*

—Extract from the First of May Order of the People's Commissar for Defense, Joseph Stalin.

TREES, as well as people, have each their own fate in war. I saw an enormous slice of a forest blasted by the fire of our artillery. It was in this forest that the Germans had entrenched themselves after being driven out of village C. Dead German soldiers lay under the fallen trunks of the pine trees. Their lacerated bodies were rotting in the green fern, and the resinous odor of the shattered pine trees was unable to overpower the stiflingly nauseous, sharp stench of corpses.

It seemed as though the earth itself with its brown, burnt, hard-rimmed shell holes emitted the odor of the grave. Silent and majestic death reigned over this open space which our shells had created and ploughed up. But in the very center of the clearing stood a lonely, miraculously preserved little birch tree, its shrapnel-wounded branches swaying in the breeze that rustled its young leaves.

We went across the clearing. The liaison Red Army soldier who walked in front of me gently touched the birch tree with his hand and asked in sincere and friendly astonishment: "How on earth did you manage to escape, my dear?"

But whereas a pine tree is destroyed by a shell, falling as though mown down and leaving a spiky stump oozing with resin, the oak tree meets death in a different manner. A German shell landed on the trunk of an old oak tree growing on the bank of a nameless little river. Half the tree withered, but the other half, that was bent toward the water by the explosion, took on a wonderful new life in the spring and decked itself with fresh foliage. And no doubt to this very day the lower branches of the mutilated oak tree bathe in the water, while the upper branches still eagerly put forth their sharp, tough leaves towards the sun.

TALL, stooping a little, with broad shoulders raised like a kite's, Lieutenant Gerasimov sat at the entrance of a dugout and related the details of today's battle, especially the enemy's tank attack which had been beaten off by the battalion. The lieutenant's thin face was calm, almost impassive. His inflamed eyes were screwed up in a fatigued way. He talked in a thick bass voice, crossing the big knotty fingers of his hands from time to time, and somehow this gesture, so eloquent of unspoken grief or of deep and oppressive reflection, did not seem to fit with his strong frame and energetic, manly face.

But suddenly he became silent. His face was momentarily transformed, his swarthy cheeks grew pale, the swellings under his cheek bones were drawn inward, and his eyes, that were fixed in front of him, flamed up with such inextinguishable, ferocious hatred that I involuntarily turned aside from his gaze and saw three German prisoners coming through the forest from the advance line of our defense, with a Red Army soldier behind them



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in a summer tunic almost bleached by the sun and with his cap pushed to the back of his head.

The Red Army soldier was walking slowly, the rifle swaying in his hands and the bayonet flashing in the sun. The German prisoners were likewise walking slowly, reluctantly moving their feet, which were shod in short boots plastered with yellow clay. The elderly German who was walking in front had sunken cheeks with a thick growth of scrubby beard. He threw in our direction a wolfish look from under his brows and turned aside, adjusting as he walked the helmet attached to his belt. And then Lieutenant Gerasimov jumped up impetuously and shouted to the Red Army soldier in a sharp voice: "Are you taking them for a walk? Quicken your pace!"

Apparently he was about to say something more, but was choked with emotion. He turned round abruptly and ran quickly down the steps into the dugout.

The political worker who was present said in a low voice in reply to my look of astonishment: "He can't help it. It's nerves. He has been a prisoner with the Germans. Didn't you know? Have a talk with him some time. He suffered a good deal there and since then he can't bear to see any Hitlerites alive. Alive, mind you! He doesn't mind looking at dead ones. . . . I should say that he even does that with pleasure. But when he sees German prisoners he either shuts his eyes and sits down pale and perspiring, or turns aside and goes away."

The political worker moved closer to me and said in a whisper: "I've gone into attack with him twice. You should have seen what he did! I've seen all sorts of things, but the way he uses the bayonet and the butt end—it's something terrible!"

At night the German heavy artillery kept up a disturbing fire. Methodical gun fire at equal intervals of time was heard in the distance. A few seconds later the iron rumble of shells was heard in the starry sky above our heads. The roar suddenly increased and then faded away. And then, somewhere behind us in the direction of the road that in the daytime was thick with machines carrying ammunition to the front line, there was a flash of yellow flame and the thundering noise of an explosion.

In the intervals between the firing, when the stillness came into its own again in the forest, one could hear the faint buzz of midgets and the timid cross-calls of frogs, disturbed by the gunfire, in the neighboring swamp.

We lay under a thicket of hazels. Keeping the midgets at bay with a broken branch, Lieutenant Gerasimov told me about himself in a leisurely way. I give the story just as I have been able to remember it.

Before the war (said Gerasimov) I worked as a mechanic in a factory in western Siberia. I was called up on July 9 last year. My family consists of my wife, two children, and my invalid father. Well, my wife cried, as is usual, when we said goodbye, and her parting words were: "Defend our country and us with all your might. If necessary, give your life so that victory may be ours." I remember I laughed and said to her: "What are you—a wife or a family agitator? I'm grown up, and as regards victory, we'll tear it out of the fascists together with their throats. Don't worry."

My father didn't shed any tears, of course, but even he didn't let me go without instructions. "Remember, Victor," he said, "the Gerasimov family is no ordinary family. You're a worker by descent. Your great-grandfather was a worker in Stroganov's time. Our family has been making iron for the country in this war. The power is yours. It made you a commander of the reserve before the war, and you must strike the foe with all your might!"

"It shall be done, father."

On the way to the railway station I called on the regional committee of the Party. The secretary was a very dry sort of fellow. Well, I thought, if my wife and father do a bit of agitating as a send-off, then this fellow won't give me any quarter. But it turned out just the opposite. "Take a seat, Gerasimov," the secretary said to me. "Let's have a chat before you go." We were silent for a while and then he got up and said: "I remember you, Gerasimov, as far back as when you were a boy with ears sticking out, then later on as a Young Communist, and now I know you as a Communist. Go and give it to those beasts without mercy. The Party organization relies on you."

For the first time I embraced my Party secretary. And, damn it all, he was nothing like the dry old stick I'd always taken him for. His cordiality had such a pleasant effect on me that I came out of the regional committee offices feeling happy and excited. And my wife cheered up too.

You know yourself that it's not a cheerful matter for a wife to see her husband off to the front. Well, of course, my wife got a little confused in her grief. She kept wanting to say something important, but she got muddled in the head and it carried away all her thoughts.

The train started and she walked along outside my compartment. She wouldn't let go my hand and said quickly: "Take care of yourself, Victor. Don't catch cold at the front." "Of course I won't, Nadya!" I said to her. "I'll take good care I don't catch cold. The climate there is excellent, and very temperate even. . . ." It was bitter to have to part, and then I felt happier because of my wife's dear, silly tears. I began to feel a quiet hatred of the Germans. Well, I thought, our perfidious neighbors have attacked us. Now look out! We'll pay you back! . . .

*Gerasimov was silent for a few minutes, as he listened to machine-gun fire opening up in the region of the front. When the firing ceased as suddenly as it had begun, he continued:*

Before the war we used to get machines from Germany at the factory. I sometimes went over every detail as many as five times and looked at it from every angle. There was no doubt about it, clever hands had made the machines. I read the books of German writers and somehow grew accustomed to regard the German people with respect. It's true that I sometimes wondered how such an industrious and talented people could put up with the odious Hitler regime. But after all that was their own affair. . . .

Then the war broke out in western Europe. When I went to the front I thought: The Germans have great technical knowledge and their army also is not bad. Damn it all, it's even interesting to fight such an opponent and give him a beating. And as for us, we're pretty tough nuts ourselves. I must admit I didn't expect any particular honesty of the enemy. What honesty can there be when you have to do with fascism? But I never thought we should have to fight such unconscionable swine as the German army has shown itself to be! But I'll talk about that later.

At the end of July our section arrived at the front. We went into battle on July 27 in the early morning. At first it was a novelty. A trifle terrifying—they kept gaining upon us with their mine-throwers. But toward the evening we got more used to it and gave it to them hot and strong.

We drove them out of one village. In that battle we captured fifteen prisoners. I remember how we brought them in, pale and frightened. My men had cooled down after the battle and were taking everything they could to the prisoners. One brought them a pot of soup, another one gave them tobacco and cigarettes, somebody else treated them to tea. They slapped them on the back and called them comrades. "What are you fighting for, comrades?" they said.

But one of our officers said: "What are you slobbering over these 'friends' for? You should see what they do over there behind the front line and how they treat our wounded and the peaceful population." Then he walked away. It was as though he had poured a bucket of cold water over us.

Soon we began to advance, and then we saw everything with our own eyes: villages burned to the ground; hundreds of shot women, children, and old people; the mutilated bodies of Red Army soldiers who had been taken prisoner; violated and savagely murdered women, girls, and adolescents. One in particular remained in my memory. She was about eleven years old. The Germans had caught her on her way to school, dragged her into an orchard, violated and killed her—a little girl, a child. Her blood-stained schoolbooks lay round about her. Her face was terribly slashed. Her hand gripped her open school bag. We covered the body and stood in silence.

Then my comrades went away, still in silence, but I continued to stand there. I remember I picked up one of the books: "Physical Geography, manual for the lower middle and middle school." It was a book I knew:



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"I fell down. He then kicked me until he was tired of kicking. I won't forget that German as long as I live."

my daughter was in the fifth form herself.

In a ravine we came across a place where they had tortured Red Army men who had been taken prisoner. Have you ever been in a butcher's shop? That is just what this place looked like. On the branches of the trees growing about the ravine hung bloodstained trunks of armless and legless bodies with half the skin torn away. In a separate heap were the dead bodies of ten men. It was impossible to say which man the parts belonged to. It was just a heap of flesh cut up into large pieces. On top was a pile of eight Red Army caps placed one on top of the other. Words can't describe all that I saw. You need to see it with your own eyes. . . . I've said enough for the present.

*Lieutenant Gerasimov was silent for a long while. "May one smoke here?" I asked. "Yes, smoke under your hand," he replied in a hoarse voice, and lighting up, he continued.*

You can understand that we went wild when we saw all that the Germans had done. What else could you expect? We realized that we had to do not with people, but with beastly degenerates with a satanic lust for blood. The Germans are now killing, violating, and executing our people with the same thoroughness with which they formerly made lathes and machines.

Later on we again retreated, but we fought like devils. Almost all the men in my company were Siberians. Nevertheless we defended the soil of the Ukraine to the point of desperation. Many of my fellow-countrymen perished in the Ukraine. But we knocked out far more Germans! We retreated, but we gave them something to think about.

*Eagerly drawing at his cigarette, Lieutenant Gerasimov began to talk in a slightly different tone.*

The Ukraine is a fine country, and nature is wonderful there. Every village and hamlet seemed to us like our own. Perhaps it was because we shed our blood there without stinting, and blood, as you know, gives people a kinship. . . . Whenever we left a village, it wrung our hearts unbearably. We were sorry, painfully sorry. We averted our gaze from one another as we went away.

At that time I didn't think I would fall into the hands of the Germans. But it happened. In September I was wounded for the first time, but I remained in the line. On the 21st I was wounded a second time in the battle at Denisovsko, in the Poltava region, and was taken prisoner. The German tanks broke through on our left flank, and the infantry streamed through after them. We fought our way out of the encirclement.

In this affair my company sustained very big losses. Twice we beat off the enemy's tank attacks. We set fire to and knocked out six tanks and one armored car, and killed 120 Hitlerites, but then the Germans brought up mine-throwing batteries and we were forced to leave the height which we had held since mid-day till four o'clock. The weather had been hot since morning, the sky was cloudless, and the sun flamed so that there was hardly any air to breathe.

The mines were falling dangerously close. I remember the men were so thirsty that their lips turned black. I was giving orders in a voice that sounded unlike my own. We were running across a hollow when a mine exploded in front of me. I saw a column of black earth and dust. That was all. A splinter of the mine pierced my helmet. Another hit me in the right shoulder. I don't know how long I lay unconscious, but I was roused by the sound of trampling feet. Raising my head, I saw that I was lying in a different spot from where I had fallen. I was without my tunic, and my shoulder had been hastily bound up with something.

And there was no helmet on my head. My head, too, was bound up with something but the bandage was not drawn tight and the end hung down to my chest. For a moment I thought that my men had carried me away and bandaged me as they went. When I struggled to raise my head I hoped to see my own people, but it was not they who were running towards me, but Germans. The trampling of their feet had restored me to consciousness. I saw them very distinctly as though on the screen in a good cinema.

I GROPED about me. There was no weapon near me, no revolver, no rifle, not even a grenade. One of my men must have taken the weapons from me. Now it's death, I thought. What else did I think about in that moment? If you want this for a future novel you'll have to write something of your own, for I couldn't think of anything at the time. The Germans were already coming very close, and I didn't want to die lying down. I simply didn't want to, I couldn't die lying down. You understand?

I made a supreme effort and got on to my knees, supporting myself with my hands on the ground. When they reached me I was already standing on my legs, swaying and fearing lest I should fall again and they would kill me as I lay. I can't remember a single one of the faces. They stood around me, talking and laughing.

I said to them: "Come on. Kill me, you swine. Kill me or I'll fall down again." One of them struck me on the neck with the butt end of his rifle. I fell down, but managed to get up again. They burst out laughing, and one of them waved his hand "Get along!" he said. I went.

My face was covered with congealed blood, and the blood was still running from the wound in my head. It was very warm and sticky. I ached all over, and was unable to



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raise my right arm. I remember I very much wanted to lie down and go nowhere, but I kept on walking. . . . No, I had no desire whatever to die, still less to remain a prisoner. Overcoming the giddiness and nausea, I managed to walk with great difficulty, and that meant I was alive and still able to do something. And how thirsty I was! My mouth was parched, and all the time, as long as I moved my legs, there hovered before my eyes a sort of black blind. I was almost unconscious, but I walked and thought. . . .

They formed us into a column and drove us toward the west. A fairly strong escort walked along the sides of the road. There were ten German motorcyclists. They drove us at a quick pace and my strength began to fail. Twice I fell, but I knew that if I lay a moment too long and the column went past me, they would shoot me on the spot.

This happened to a Red Army sergeant who was walking in front of me. He was wounded in the foot and could hardly walk, groaning and sometimes crying out with pain. We went about a mile and he suddenly cried out: "No! I can't. Good-bye, comrades!" and sat down in the middle of the road. They tried to pick him up and put him on his feet as they went along, but he fell to the ground again.

I remember as in a dream his very pale, young face, frowning eyebrows and tear-dimmed eyes. . . . The column went on and he remained behind. I glanced back and saw a motorcyclist go right up to him without getting off the saddle, draw a revolver, put it close to the sergeant and shoot him.

Before we reached our destination the Germans shot some other Red Army men who had remained behind.

At last I saw a little river, a broken bridge, and a motor lorry, and there I fell down on my face. Did I lose consciousness? No, I didn't. I lay stretched out full length. My comrades marched past me. One of them said quietly: "Get up, otherwise they'll kill you!" I began to tear my mouth with my fingers so that the pain would help me to get up. The column went by. I heard the scrunching of the wheels of a motorcycle as it came up to me. And somehow I got up. Without looking at the motorcyclist and staggering like a drunken man, I forced myself to catch up with the column and joined the tail-end.

The German tanks and cars that had crossed the river had dirtied the water, but we drank it, brown and muddy as it was, and it tasted to us sweeter than the very best spring water. It freshened me up tremendously and my strength returned. I could now march in the hope that I would not fall and remain lying on the road.

WE HAD hardly left the river when we met a column of medium German tanks. They were moving toward us. The driver of the front tank, realizing that we were prisoners, turned on full power and drove straight into our column at top speed. The men in front were knocked down and crushed by the caterpillar wheels. The motorcyclists burst out laughing at the spectacle. Then they formed us up again and drove us along the road.

That evening and night I made no attempt to escape. I had grown very weak from loss of blood. Moreover, they guarded us very closely, and any attempt at escape would certainly have failed. But how I cursed myself afterward for not making the attempt!

In the morning they drove through a village where a German section was stationed. The German footsoldiers came out into the street to look at us. The escort made us run through the whole village at the double. They thought it necessary to humiliate us in the eyes of this new German section that had just come up to the front, and so we ran. Whoever fell or lagged behind was immediately fired on.

By the evening we were already in the camp for prisoners of war. It was the yard of some machine tractor station, entirely surrounded with barbed wire. Prisoners of war were standing inside. We were handed over to the camp guard, who drove us into the yard with the butt ends of their rifles.

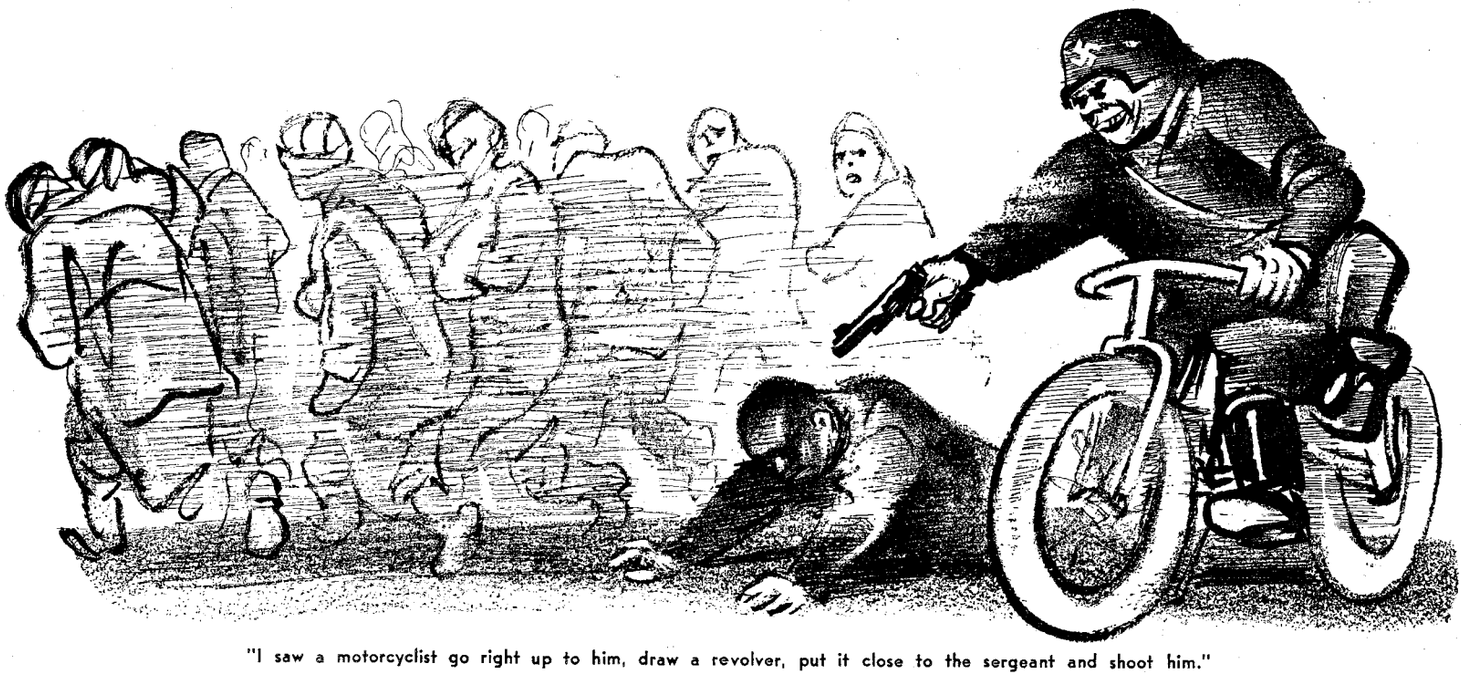
To say that the camp was hell is to say the least! There was no lavatory. The prisoners had to relieve themselves where they were, and stood and lay in the filth. The weakest ones could no longer get up. Water and food were given once a day; a jug of water and a handful of millet or stale sunflower seed, that was all. To many they "forgot" to give anything at all. Two days after our arrival there were heavy rains. The mud in the camp was up to your knees. In the morning the prisoners steamed like horses, and the rain poured down without ceasing.

Each night several dozen men died. Day by day we grew weaker and weaker from starvation. And my wounds tortured me into the bargain.

On the sixth day I felt that my shoulder and the wound in my head were getting worse. Suppuration started, and then I noticed a bad smell. Alongside the camp were what had been the stables of the collective farm, where heavily wounded Red Army soldiers were lying. In the morning I applied to the NCO of the guard, and asked permission to see the doctor, who, I was told, was looking after the wounded.

The NCO spoke Russian quite well. He replied: "Go, you Russian, to your own doctor. He'll help you straight away!" I didn't understand the joke at the time and went hopefully to the stables. A Red Army doctor of the third rank met me at the entrance. He was emaciated to the point of exhaustion. He was already half-demented because of all he had been through.

The wounded lay on piles of manure and were stifled by the horrible stench that filled the stable. The wounds of most of them were teeming with maggots. Those who were able



"I saw a motorcyclist go right up to him, draw a revolver, put it close to the sergeant and shoot him."



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"Beyond the ravine the forest was more dense. I hurried in that direction."

to move were scratching them out of their wounds with their fingers or with little sticks. There was also a heap of dead prisoners lying there. The bodies had not yet been taken away.

"WHAT can I do for you?" the doctor asked me. "I haven't a single bandage. I've got nothing. Go away from here, for God's sake. Go! Sprinkle your wounds with ashes." And that is what I did.

The NCO met me with a smile. "Well, how goes it? Your soldier is an excellent doctor. Did he give you any help?" I wanted to go past him without saying anything, but he struck me in the face with his fist and shouted: "So, you don't want to answer, you cattle!"

I fell down. He then kicked me until he was tired of kicking. I won't forget that German as long as I live. No, I won't forget him! And even then he went on striking me at intervals. He would wander toward the barbed wire, and as soon as he saw me he would order me to come out. Then he would begin to strike me in silence, with a look of concentration.

You wonder how I remained alive? Before the war, and before I became a mechanic, I worked as a docker on the Kam. I could carry two sacks of salt with a hundredweight in each. I was pretty strong. I didn't complain. And perhaps I've got a good constitution in general. But the main thing is that I had no desire to die. My power of resistance was strong. I wanted to get back into the ranks of the defenders of my country, and I have returned in order to avenge myself on the enemy to the last!

From the first camp, which was a sort of distributing center, I was taken to a second camp about 100 miles away. There the arrangements were just the same as in the first: high poles with barbed wire, not a roof over your head, nothing. The food was the same, but from time to time instead of raw millet they gave us a basin of boiled rotten corn. Or they dragged the carcasses of dead horses into the camp and left them for the prisoners to share amongst themselves. In order not to die of starvation we ate it, and died in hundreds as a result.

On top of all this, the cold started in October and it rained without ceasing. There were sharp frosts in the morning. We suffered cruelly from the cold. I managed to take the tunic and overcoat off a dead Red Army man, but even that did not save me from the cold. As for the hunger, we had got used to that.

The soldiers who guarded us had grown fat on robbery. They were all turned out of the same mold, all arrogant scoundrels. This, for instance, was the way they amused themselves: in the morning a corporal would come up to the barbed wire and say through the interpreter: "The distribution of food will now take place. The distribution will take place on the left side." The corporal would go away. All who could stand on their legs would go to the left side. We would wait an hour, two hours, three hours—hundreds of shivering, living skeletons.

We would stand and wait. Then all of a sudden the Germans would appear at the other side. They would throw lumps of cut-up horse flesh through the wire. The whole crowd of prisoners, driven by hunger, would rush to the spot and scramble for the lumps of grimy horse flesh. The Germans would stand watching and laughing. There would be shouts and groans, and the dead and wounded would remain lying on the ground.

The ober-lieutenant could scarcely restrain his laughter. He would say: "Intolerable disorders have taken place at the distribution of food. If this occurs again, I will give orders to have you Russian swine shot without mercy. Clear away the dead and wounded." The German soldiers crowding behind the camp commander simply died of laughter. This piece of wit on the part of their commander was just to their taste.

We dragged the dead bodies out of the camp in silence. The dead were buried not far away, in a ravine.

At this camp they beat us with their fists, with sticks and butt ends. They just beat us. . . .

My wounds healed. Then they opened once again, no doubt owing to the damp and the blows. They hurt very much. But I was still alive and had not given up hope of escaping.

We slept in the mud. There was no straw. There was nothing. We huddled together and lay like that. All night long there was a coming and going—those who were lying in the mud at the very end were freezing and so were those that were lying at the top. It was no dream, but a bitter torture. . . .

SO THE days went by, as though in a heavy dream. A child could have knocked me down. Sometimes I looked at my hands with their withered, dried-up skin and wondered how I was ever going to get out. Then I would curse myself for not having tried to escape before. Even if they had killed me, I shouldn't have had to go through all the misery I was now experiencing.

The winter came. We shoveled the snow away. We slept on the frozen ground. There were fewer and fewer of us in the camp. At last we were informed that in a few days' time we were to be sent away to work. We all livened up. In each of us there was a hope, however small, that it might be possible to run away.

The night was quiet but cold. Before dawn we heard the sound of gunfire. All the men



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around me began to stir. When the rumble was repeated, someone shouted out: "Comrades, our men are attacking!"

Then something happened that defies description. The whole camp sprang to its feet as to the word of command. Even those who had not stood up for several days got on to their feet. Groans were heard all around. The man who stood next to me was groaning his heart out. I also. . . .

*Lieutenant Gerasimov's voice broke. He was silent for a moment. Then, regaining his composure, he continued.*

I also had tears running down my cheeks and they froze in the wind. Someone started to sing the "International" in a weak voice. We took it up with our thin voices.

The batteries opened fire on us from machine guns and automatics. The word of command resounded: "Back!"

I lay and wept like a child. But they were tears of joy and of pride in our people. The Germans might beat us who were unarmed, they might weaken us with hunger and torture us, but they could not break our spirit, nor will they ever break it.

*I was unable to hear the end of Lieutenant Gerasimov's story that night. He was urgently called to the section H.Q. However, we met again a few days later.*

You ask me how I got away? I'll tell you. Soon after the time when we heard the gunfire in the night, they sent us to work on building fortifications. They drove us to the north from the camp. The same thing happened as at the beginning. Exhausted men fell down and were shot and left by the roadside. One was shot by a German NCO for picking up a frozen potato as he went.

We were crossing a potato field. Goncharov, an Ukrainian, picked up the cursed potato and was about to hide it. The NCO noticed it. Without saying a word, he went up to Goncharov and shot him in the back of the neck. The column was halted and re-formed. "All this belongs to the German government," said the NCO, making a wide sweep with his hand. "Anyone of you who takes anything without permission will be shot."

In the villages through which we passed, the women threw us pieces of bread and baked potatoes. Some of us were able to pick up the gifts, but the rest were unable to do so. The NCO fired at the windows. We were ordered to quicken our pace, but children are fearless folk: they ran out into the road several yards ahead and put the bread there, so that we could pick it up. I got a big baked potato. I shared it with my neighbor and we ate it, skin and all. Never in my life have I eaten such a tasty potato.

The fortifications were being built in a forest. The Germans greatly increased our guard and gave us spades. I didn't want to build fortifications. I wanted to destroy them. That day, before evening, I had made up my mind. I climbed out of the trench we had dug, took the spade in my left hand and went up to the guard.

I had previously noticed that the rest of the Germans were at the big pit and none of the guard was near, except the man who was looking after our group. "My spade is broken. Look at it," I muttered, as I went up to the soldier. The thought flashed through my mind that if I hadn't the strength to knock him down with the first blow, I was done for!

The German apparently noticed something in the expression of my face. He made a movement with his shoulders as he took off the strap of his automatic, and then I dealt him a blow in the face with my spade. I couldn't hit him on the head on account of his helmet. Obviously I still had strength enough! The German fell without a murmur and lay flat on the ground. I took his automatic and turned to run. But I found I couldn't. I hadn't the strength to run. I waited a moment, took a deep breath, and then went off at a trot.

BEYOND the ravine the forest was more dense. I hurried in that direction. I can't remember how many times I fell and picked myself up again. But every moment I was getting farther and farther away. Tired and panting, I was making my way through the thick growth on the other side of the hill when I heard the bark of automatics and shouting far behind me. It would be no easy matter for them to catch me now. Twilight was falling. But in case the Germans succeeded in getting on to my track and coming close, I would keep the last bullet for myself.

"That is what makes me and all of us fight with such ferocity."

This thought cheered me up, and I went my way quietly and cautiously. I spent the night in the forest. There was a village about half a mile away, but I was afraid to go there for fear of running into the Germans.

The following day I was picked up by guerrillas. I rested a couple of weeks in their dugout, grew stronger and gathered my forces. At first they treated me with a certain amount of distrust, notwithstanding the fact that I produced my Party ticket from the lining of my coat, where I had managed to hide it in the camp. Later on, when I began to take part in their operations, their attitude towards me changed immediately.

It was there that I started to keep a record of the number of Germans I killed. To this day I keep it carefully, and little by little the figure is mounting toward 100.

In January the partisans took me across the front line. I spent about a month in hospital. They removed the mine splinter from my shoulder, but the rheumatism and the other ailments I contracted in the camp will have to be treated after the war.

From the hospital I went home on leave in order to recover. I stayed there a week. I couldn't stand it any longer. I longed to get back here. Whatever they may say at home, my place is at the front till the end.

*We said good-bye at the entrance of the dugout. Gazing pensively at the sunlit clearing, Lieutenant Gerasimov said to me:*

We have learned to make war in the proper way and to hate and love. In war all feelings are excellently sharpened. You may think it is impossible to put love and hatred side by side, or, as they say, to harness a horse with a deer, but with us they are harnessed together and they pull together wonderfully. I deeply hate the Germans for all they have done to my country and to me personally. And at the same time I love my people with all my heart and do not want them to suffer under the German yoke. That is what makes me and all of us fight with such ferocity.

It is these two feelings, embodied in action, that will lead us to victory. And if the love of our country remains in our hearts and continues to remain as long as our hearts beat, we carry hatred on the tips of our bayonets. . . . Excuse me if I've gone a long way round to express the idea, but that is what I think.

*Lieutenant Gerasimov ended his story. And for the first time since I made his acquaintance he smiled a simple, sweet, childish smile. And I also for the first time noticed that this thirty-two-year-old lieutenant, who has suffered so much but was still as tough and strong as an oak tree, had dazzlingly white hair on his temples. So pure white was the hair that a white thread of cobweb sticking to his cap was invisible as soon as it touched his temple. No matter how hard I peered, it was impossible to see it. . . .*

MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV.



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# FRANCO: SHAKE-UP AND SHAKE-DOWN

***Alvarez del Vayo, former Foreign Minister of the Spanish republic, lifts the curtain on the recent Cabinet shifts. Berlin's not-so-secret operations in Madrid. The futile policy of appeasement.***

*Alvarez del Vayo was Foreign Minister of the Spanish republic, and is now in this country, associated with the "Nation," and the Free World Association. The following address was released to the press after having been broadcast on WQXR in New York under the auspices of the World Peaceways Forum, Sept. 13, 1942.*

I AM happy to have this opportunity of presenting the Spanish issue before you. The recent political crisis has succeeded in obscuring the real facts about the situation in Spain. On the one hand, there are people who honestly believe that Franco has swung to the side of the Allies. They feel that the statement made by President Roosevelt a few days earlier announcing a joint effort by all the American nations to help restore Spain's cultural monuments played a role in precipitating the shake-up. On the other hand, there are those who suspect that the Cabinet changes are just another Axis maneuver designed to make the Allies believe that a shift which involves Franco's own brother-in-law must mean a Spanish-Allied rapprochement.

If we accept the thesis that Spain's foreign policy is involved in the crisis, the second interpretation approaches the truth more nearly than the first. But to be perfectly honest, I don't believe that Berlin had much to do with Franco's recent moves. The explanation, it seems to me, is much simpler than that. Perhaps Freda Kirchwey has given the most accurate and lucid explanation of what happened, in an article which appeared in the *Nation*. She says: "Franco moved with decision; he took the most striking step possible, tossing his own brother-in-law, the Foreign Minister and head of the Phalanx, to the army. And then in a dramatic counter-move he threw Varela himself to the Phalanx [Falange]."

The fact is, the new Spanish Cabinet members represent exactly the same foreign policy as did their predecessors. It is true that Senor Serrano Suner, Franco's brother-in-law, was one of the most outspoken and enthusiastic Naziphiles in the whole Franquist party. But we mustn't forget that his successor, General Jordana, was Franco's Foreign Minister during the entire Spanish war and helped to install the Germans and Italians in Spain. The only difference between the two is that Serrano Suner typifies the modern fascist and has a more adroit mind than the general, who is an ardent monarchist and cannot be considered a member of the Phalanx. But the new Minister of the Interior, Blas Gomez Perez, and the new Minister without Portfolio, Manuel Mora Figueroa, are both 100 percent Falangists whose membership in the party long antedates that of Serrano Suner himself.

## Remember Pearl Harbor!

WE ARE grateful for this opportunity to publish Senor Alvarez del Vayo's analysis of the recent Cabinet shifts in Madrid. What he says should scotch those rosy estimates—evidently inspired by certain gentlemen in our State Department—that the shifts represented a gesture on behalf of the United Nations, a triumph for their appeasement policies. The truth, evidently, is at the opposite pole. The whole business recalls the maneuvers Nomura and Kurusu pulled those tragic days before Pearl Harbor, when diplomacy screened impending military actions.

Consider the background to the Cabinet changes. They occur at a moment when the whole Axis world speculates upon the imminence of a land invasion of the Continent. The shifts are made when the widespread dissatisfaction of certain leading categories within Spain—and popular resentment goaded by a regime of hunger—reaches the point of explosion. They come, too, at a time when Mexico's and Brazil's entry into the war alter the relationship of forces within Hispano-America to the detriment of the Axis. The Falange, Hitler's agency south of the Rio Grande, finds its base for operations narrowing rapidly.

Understanding these things, and understanding too that Franco Spain is an integral part of the Axis setup, as Senor del Vayo indicates, now is the time to take the offensive against Franco on this continent. Instead, we find that the State Department helps strengthen the caudillo's hand. It does not proclaim the truth to our neighbors and allies of the south but bursts forth with a "cultural rehabilitation" scheme. United States Ambassador Hayes, a Franco sympathizer, states sympathetically that he understands Spain's position in this war; Sir Samuel Hoare, a notorious Munichman and Britain's ambassador to Madrid, returns to London with suspicious plans. All this while popular anger and popular action increase within Spain.

Undoubtedly the policy of the State Department confuses our friends within the oppressed nations, and confounds our allies whom we urge to expend maximum effort against Hitler. This dangerous—and stupid—policy provides time for Franco, precious time to prepare his attack in consonance with the plans of his Berlin masters.

If Hitler fears the imminence of a second front, one of his preparations would be to attack Gilbraltar, bottle up the western Mediterranean while he continues his program in the eastern part of that sea. And for that he needs a strengthened Franco. And, tragically, we too are building him up.

Yes, "Remember Pearl Harbor" is a slogan that the American people have adopted. It is tragic that our State Department is not operating under that battle-cry.

The day before the shake-up occurred, on the very day of the shake-up, and on the following day, the German broadcasts to Latin America quoted the Spanish official press which outdid itself in eulogizing the exploits of the German army on the Russian front, and in attacking the United States. Two days later the papers devoted two lines to the latest speech of President Roosevelt and a column and a half to a vicious attack on that speech wired from Berlin.

THE most extraordinary feature of the whole affair, it seems to me, is the apparent difficulty of officials in the Allied capitals in understanding what is happening in Spain. Certainly official Spain has made no secret of the attitude of the Franco government and the Phalanx toward the United Nations. We need no Secret Service to find out that there are approximately 100,000 Nazis in Spain today. It is an open secret that these Nazis command and control the police, the radio, and the propaganda machinery of Spain. And it is equally well known that Hitler's ambassador to Spain, Baron von Stohrer, is one of the most influential men in Madrid. Most people have probably forgotten by this time the role that Baron von Stohrer played in the last world war when he was a member of the German Embassy staff in Madrid. It was he who organized the gangs of terrorists in Barcelona whose job it was to assassinate Catalonian industrialists then producing war material for the Allies. Von Papen was in charge of the same kind of "activity" in the United States at that time. It is natural to have forgotten events which took place twenty-five years ago. But who can overlook Baron von Stohrer's interference in the present foreign policy of Spain?

Less known is the fact that the Spanish army is also largely under the direct command of the Nazis. Certainly the Allied governments must know it, for just a month ago the Spanish General Beigbeder made a dramatic flight from Spain to England *a la* Rudolph Hess. General Beigbeder is an important figure—he was at one time the High Commissioner for Morocco, and after the Spanish war succeeded Jordana as Foreign Minister. Upon his arrival in London he stated that he had left Spain because he was not disposed to serve in an army that was subject to foreign command. Surely no one is naive enough to believe that he was referring to British or American officers in the Spanish army! Moreover, it is common knowledge today that several Nazi divisions are now stationed on the French-Spanish border. At any given moment they are prepared to march into Spain, either with the open consent of the Franco government or with the secret acquiescence of Ma-



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drid in spite of any formal protests that might be made "for the record." If the opening of a Western Front in Europe is delayed, if Russia should suffer a decisive military setback, the number of these divisions could be sharply increased in order for Hitler to intensify his "ideological" pressure on Spain.

Therefore, all interpretations predicated on the assumption that Franco can be split away from Hitler and won over to the democracies are pure wishful thinking. First: Unless the Allied secret service is in possession of confidential information that General Franco has undergone some miraculous conversion to the democratic cause, one thing is certain: Franco does not want the democracies to win the war. Second: Franco is not the master of Spain. In the three years of terror and hunger that he has forced on the people of Spain in order to stay in power, he has had to seek the cooperation of the Gestapo. And all of us know that when the Gestapo is invited into a country—and sometimes even when it has not been invited—it quickly takes over the reins.

Under Franco, Spain will remain neutral as long as neutrality suits Hitler's purposes. It is Hitler who decides—not Franco. And right now it suits Hitler's purposes to have a so-called "neutral" Spain which can provide bases for German submarines, send out Falangist agents and Nazi propaganda in Spanish ships calling at Latin American ports—in a word, a Spain that can render all the services that a well trained Quisling such as Franco can offer without even going to war at the side of the Axis.

This much is certain: the democracies haven't the slighest chance of winning Franco to their side. Not a chance to neutralize him against the pressure of Berlin. Sometimes I almost wish they could. After all, I am convinced that Franco cannot survive a Hitler defeat. After the war no policies of appeasement, no Allied gestures of gratitude to Franco, no Allied loans from Washington and London can keep Franco in power. For if there is any truth in the statement that this is a people's war, then the people of Europe will at last be free to express their will. And the people of Spain free to express theirs.

If I am, then, opposed to the policy of appeasement toward Spain, it is not only because I am opposed in principle to any policy aimed at appeasing the fascist dictators, but because, in the specific case of Franco, I am convinced that those efforts wil prove as futile and useless as they did in 1940 when the Allies attempted to woo Mussolini.

It is from the Spanish people, and from them alone, that the Allies must seek genuine support for the cause of the United Nations.

ALVAREZ DEL VAYO.

One of Franco's recent projects to restore Spanish culture. Only a pile of rubble remained after fascist aviators bombed this public building in Madrid.



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# DEATH OF THE POLL TAX?

***First licking for the bourbon congressmen and what they are up to now. The unprecedented opportunity to return voting rights to 10,000,000 citizens.***

*Washington.*

THE poll tax can be abolished in the next few weeks. Ten million citizens—6,000,000 whites and 4,000,000 Negroes—can be enfranchised to exercise their democratic privileges in the November election. The immediate need is to muster a mass movement immediately of such proportions and such power that no flashy footwork on the part of the southern bourbons can prevent the knockout.

Of the 218 signatures necessary to bring the Geyer anti-poll tax bill out of the House Judiciary Committee where it has been deliberately buried, 208 have been obtained at this writing. A sufficient public clamor can easily push ten congressmen over the line to complete the petition. The bill will then come to the House floor. Once it is brought into the open, the chances are better than even that Congress will act favorably.

The recent passage of legislation granting the vote to the armed forces, amended to include those who have not paid their poll taxes, jolted congressional opposition back on its heels. The victory represented a good deal more than a grant of equality to service men from the South; as a precedent, it knocked the wind out of poll tax advocates who sought protection in elaborate sophistries of constitutionality and states' rights. If freeing men in the armed forces of the poll tax burden is constitutional and does not invade state sovereignty, then obviously these same legalisms do not carry any more weight when it comes to the voting rights of millions of citizens out of uniform.

Bo Brown—Office of War Information

"You get five demerits for plinking your teacher, and you are expelled from school for wasting rubber."

The bourbons were quite aware of the danger when the Soldiers Vote Bill came before Congress. They struggled loud and angrily—Senators George and Connally, Representatives Hobbs, Whittington, Rich, and the anti-Semitic, anti-Negro Rankin, shrill-voiced and wizened, his white hair standing on end as he invoked the magic formula of "white supremacy." The spokesmen of feudal gentility raised hell individually and collectively; they threatened and blustered, and pictured democracy violated and dying because democratic prerogatives would be shared with the common people. They lost their fight. The poll tax will never be the same.

They lost, but they still can't be counted out. Forced to give ground on the Soldiers Vote Bill, they are determined to head off any further democratic invasion of their fiefs. Senator Byrd has been scurrying around the Hill organizing a new line of defense. Deals are in the air. The attorney generals of the poll tax states are on their way to Washington to testify before the Senate Judiciary Committee with technical, hair-splitting arguments to prove that passing the Pepper bill and granting the ballot to the majority of people in the South would defame the memory of the Founding Fathers.

TODAY the poll tax is a more important issue than at any previous time. For national unity demands that the *ends* of this people's war—outlined in the Atlantic Charter—must be translated into the *means* of winning the war. Still incomplete, for example, is the mobilization of the Negro people. To bring the Negro people fully into the war effort requires some significant act. A minimum program would include the elimination of job discrimination; the prevention, and stoppage by force if necessary, of lynch and violence against the Negro people; and the extension to them of the right to vote.

Action against the poll tax, therefore, can no longer be viewed—as has too often been the attitude in the past—as a charitable gesture of good will or reformist condescension. The National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax points out that among the Negro people the struggle for the franchise has become a rallying point of all win-the-war elements. As yet, unfortunately, there exists no unified pro-war Negro movement. A clear-cut victory on the poll tax issue can serve as a catalyst.

Still, it will be no walkover even if public pressure is sufficient to obtain the ten additional signatures that will bring the Geyer bill before Congress. Congressman Geyer of California died last year; there are rumors that an attempt will be made to use his death as an excuse to invalidate the bill even if it is wrenched out of committee. Certainly the southern bloc will filibuster and delay and move to reconsider and take recourse in the thousand and one parliamentary maneuvers open to clever tacticians. And yet they lost their fight on the Soldiers Vote Bill. Public pressure overwhelmed them. Public pressure can defeat them a second time.

The unions are united behind the Geyer bill (and the Pepper bill in the Senate). The administration would welcome repeal. But its leadership in Congress suffered from confusion during the Soldiers Vote Debate. Some administration supporters who opposed the poll tax in theory so feared the consequences of raising the issue that they turned tail at the last moment. "I am fundamentally in sympathy with this amendment," Senator Barkley



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declared. "I do not believe in the poll tax qualification for voting. . . . Yet I and many others who feel that way about the situation are confronted by the problem of whether to complicate the bill . . . by the proposed amendment or any similar amendment, which may result in no legislation whatever." Such reasoning led Barkley—joined by Senators Guffey and Smathers—to vote against the amendment, a sort of appeasement policy that fortunately did not influence the majority of congressmen.

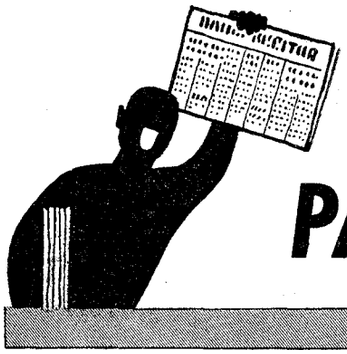
The strategy was wrong and it was uncalled for—that much the passage of the amendment proved conclusively. As opposed to Barkley and those who took his lead, other administration spokesmen, notably Senators Mead and Pepper, fought powerfully for the amendment. Their boldness, correctly asserted, resulted in legislation of greater benefit than the partial gains acceptable to Barkley and Guffey. The lesson is important.

Throughout the South a section of the win-the-war forces still indulges in rationalizations not unlike those of Barkley and Guffey. This group condemns the poll tax, adding, however, that the war must be won before domestic problems can be considered. But the poll tax is not an extraneous question. The war effort itself is strengthened by correcting flagrant abuses, by the elimination of feudal hangovers, as the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties makes clear in its excellent new pamphlet, *Abolition of the Poll Tax—A War Measure.* Lessons must be learned from experience in Burma, Malaya, Singapore, from the present danger in India.

Much demagogy, of course, has gone into the poll tax battle. For example, the appeaser Sen. "Curley" Brooks of Illinois, friend of Colonel McCormick and George Sylvester Viereck, made a grandstand play by sneaking his anti-poll tax amendment into the Soldiers Vote Bill to replace the older and previously submitted amendment by Senator Pepper. Reactionary Republicans from the North, trying to embarrass the southern Democrats by supporting repeal, eagerly hope to win the Negro vote. All the more reason why administration spokesmen must retain the initiative. While understanding the motivation of northern defeatists, the people can take advantage of the skulduggery which for once permits men like Clare Hoffman and J. Parnell Thomas to vote correctly. For all the gestures of Republican wheelhorses, Senators Pepper and Mead did the fighting for the Soldiers Vote Bill, with Vito Marcantonio and other consistent win-the-war figures exercising most weight in the House.

THE poll tax is not a southern problem—any more than Coughlin is a Michigan problem. As John P. Davis of the National Negro Congress put it: "If we needed ten divisions at a critical front, there would be little gained by bargaining to send five. Right now, we must begin to make good to the Negroes. Abolition of the poll tax would be a definite contribution. It would have immense reverberations. But who can get excited over the promises of those who don't want to anger the southern overlords and so offer Negroes only the phrase 'Later, later, maybe after the war'?"

At this moment it appears here in Washington that the chance of success is proportionate to the amount of public pressure put on Congress during the next fortnight, during the next month at the most. "White supremacy," the Hitler formula of divide-and-rule adapted to this country, got a real setback with the defeat of Talmadge in Georgia, Earl Blease in South Carolina, Gerald L. K. Smith and Tenerowicz in Michigan. The formula cracked when the anti-poll tax amendment passed Congress. If the Geyer-Pepper bill is approved during the present session, the formula will be well-nigh worthless. It is well to remember that Dies and Rankin, Cox and Howard Smith are poll tax congressmen, and that Byrd, George, McKellar, O'Daniell sit in the Senate from poll tax states. That seems argument enough against the poll tax.



# PRESS PARADE

## Epitaph

"IN THE other war, German science was not willing to hold its tongue. It issued public protests, made political suggestions, criticized government measures and stirred up feeling against them. This opposition of German science to the government was a sign of internal weakness.

"Today, German science has learned to keep silence. It is quiet and collected. It submits to discipline, in the true scientific spirit. Its dignified, modest, and judicious attitude is a great help to the government, and proves that science has found its place in the New Order. Science is no longer self-opinionated, it is no longer critical, it no longer has doubts. But it is busy."

From an article by Prof. Heinz in the "Rheinische-Westfalische Zeitung," quoted in "Die Zeitung," London.

## Education

A FOREIGN-LANGUAGE publishing house in Moscow, "Meshdunarodnaya Kniga," (The International Book) has been issuing a series of books in German mainly for use in the libraries of the war prisoners' camps. These libraries, organized in all camps, need a large amount of books as "the hunger for reading among the prisoners of war is incredibly huge" (to quote "Das Freie Wort," a camp paper published by German war prisoners in Russia). The book series consists of volumes of short stories, novelettes, poems, essays, and plays. The authors are anti-Nazi writers of all nationalities. The first edition of each of the paper-bound volumes is 10,000. The authors of the first volumes are Kressman Taylor, Mikhail Sholokhov, Lion Feuchtwanger, John Steinbeck, Erskine Caldwell, Heinrich Mann, Jean-Richard Bloch, Jose Bergamin, Friedrich Wolf, Martin Andersen Nexo, Anna Seghers, Wanda Wassilewska, Nathan Asch, Ernest Hemingway, and many others.

## Finanz

WHEN Hitler and Laval do business, who's ahead? According to the British Broadcasting Corp. a deal recently came off between the two somewhat along the following lines:

The Nazis bought from Laval a shipment of 88 mm guns made in France. No money was forthcoming, the Germans agreeing to ship a specified amount of sugar into unoccupied France as payment. The guns were delivered and the sugar started on its way. In Paris the shipment was taken over by the German authorities—as "state security." To further this "state" the Nazis sold the sugar to the French people for 4.50 francs per kilogram.

The wind-up of the deal? It cost the French people 18,000,000 francs—sweet profits for Laval and the Nazis.

**[Readers are invited to contribute to this column. A year's subscription to NEW MASSES will be given for the best item submitted each week. Please enclose the press clipping from which the item is taken.]**



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# The Economics That Will Win

THE other night 200 members of the Greater New York Chapter of the American Society of Tool Engineers got together for a dinner at the Hotel New Yorker. The chief speaker was Paul R. Smith, regional director of the War Production Board for New York and Northern New Jersey. What Mr. Smith had to say must have made these skilled technicians sick at heart. "The priority system as we know it is about to fall apart," he remarked, "because the simple fact of the matter is that we have not got the materials. . . . We are faced with a situation wherein we have sold more seats than the theatre holds; we have written a check for $300 with only $100 in the bank."

What this means in terms of war production was vividly illustrated the next day when Joseph W. Powell, special assistant to the Secretary of the Navy, told a House committee he was not surprised when the Higgins shipbuilding contract was recently canceled because of shortages of critical materials. "There will be a good many other cancellations," he said because of such shortages.

It is over two years since this country launched its war production program. It is nearly nine months since we scrapped one production setup, the OPM, and replaced it with another, the WPB, and told ourselves that now we were really going all-out. Yet today, in this crucial moment of the war in which our national existence hangs in the balance, when we should be bringing our full weight to bear in the opening of a second front in Europe, as well as adequately supplying the other fronts, vital shortages of materials are holding up production; we have just gotten around to finding out what was wrong with the rubber situation; we are only now acting to control farm prices; we are preparing to ration meat three months hence though every housewife knows that the meat shortage is already here; we are again trying something new among the leading personnel of the WPB, and President Roosevelt is telling us that this the greatest industrial nation in the world "has little more than passed the halfway mark toward maximum possible war production."

What's the answer to the bungling and inefficiency which, despite progress in certain fields, still dominate the organization of our war economy? NEW MASSES, in common with other publications and groups, has been trying to find the answer for months. For the first time we feel it has now become available. On the basis of the constructive work of the CIO, the House Tolan committee and other groups, and of such men as Bernard M. Baruch—Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party, has made a comprehensive analysis of the problems of war economy and projected a new fundamental approach which, we are convinced, offers the only real and thoroughgoing solution of our difficulties. Browder's ideas were first presented at the recent New York state convention of the Communist Party. The full text of his speech will appear in the October issue of *The Communist* and an advance reprint is now being distributed. The editors of NEW MASSES have no hesitation in pronouncing this the most important document of its kind that has yet appeared in this country. It deserves careful study by every American, no matter what his political beliefs, who wants to win the war and win it at the least cost and in the least possible time.

BROWDER'S argument is breathtaking in its clarity and logic; his proposals are so thoroughly down-to-earth and practical that we have no doubt they would appeal to every one of those 200 tool engineers who got such a ghastly earful on our production situation. Browder feels "It is useless to indulge in hectic recriminations against industrialists and managers of production because our problem is unsolved," so long as we have a piecemeal, patchwork approach to war economy. He points out that the various economic problems we face today—materials shortages, inflation, price control, wage stabilization, rationing, control of labor supply, taxes, etc. —are all phases of the single over-all problem of replacing the anarchy of the peacetime market with the organization of war economy under a central comprehensive plan.

"The key mechanism for the central administrative control of economy is rationing" —rationing not only of consumers' goods, but "in the field of production as well, the rationing of materials and labor according to plan and designed to allocate a production task to every available man and machine without regard to market relationships." And Browder points out that "The technique of such a centralized administrative control of economy is well known, and the technicians are available. As a technical problem it is merely the extension of the system by which the great trusts were built, an extension to cover the entire economy of the country." This is not socialism, but "the highest development of capitalism," state capitalism, which is "but a synonym for capitalism adjusted to the requirements of all-out war."

In a centralized economy prices, profits and wages drastically change in character, according to Browder. Prices "lose their former significance as a registration of market relationships and become a convenience of bookkeeping and accounting." Profits "lose their former significance as a source of unlimited personal consumption and as the basis for the unrestricted accumulation of private capital, because in one form or another the government controls all goods currently produced and rations them both in the realm of personal consumption and in industrial production to where they are most needed, regardless of the claims of money. The logic of war economy is that the government appropriates the use of all profits for the duration of the war except only such a residue as may be decided upon as a government 'ration' to the idle classes; that is the economic signficance of President Roosevelt's famous proposal to limit personal incomes to $25,000 per year. From the point of view of the war economy alone, it matters not at all whether the government takes control of these profits through taxation or takes them in exchange for government bonds."

WAGES likewise "must be understood in their economic sense as the allocation and guarantee of the fullest needs of food, clothing and shelter (with such social services as may be available) to the prime mover of production, the human working force in the economy, to ensure its capacity for continuous maximum production and reproduction. Thus the relative 'justice' of the claims of capital and labor in the division of the proceeds of the economy is entirely irrelevant." In urging that wages be regarded by the government, the employers, and the unions not as a matter of "rewards," but in terms of "necessities of production," Browder emphasizes that "the problem of maximum war production is fundamentally and decisively a problem of the organization and distribution of labor." And it is because labor has been merely a peripheral



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factor in the thinking of practically all government agencies that they have failed to grasp as an inexorable necessity of the war the establishment of planned, centralized control of the national economy.

We have given here only the barest outlines of Browder's speech on the economics of all-out war, but we hope we have managed to convey some glimpse of the rich, seminal character of this work. Browder's proposals are a major contribution to the war effort and highlight the character of the Communist participation in our country's fight for survival. It is time really to come to grips with the problems of war economy. Here, as in the case of the second front, these are not problems solely for the experts and the men at the top, but for the entire people. It is the people, particularly the labor movement, that can help end the present inefficiency and disorganization. As Browder points out, nothing less than a rounded, planned economic program "will bring any certainty of victory."

## Lessons for November

THE latest crop of primary elections contains small nourishment for a nation engaged in this war. There were exceptions, to be sure. Massachusetts voters said *no* to John F. Fitzgerald, who tried for the Democratic senatorial nomination with the backing of Hearst and Farley-type politicos, including the candidate's son-in-law, defeatist Joseph P. Kennedy. The nomination went to Rep. Joseph E. Casey, full supporter of Roosevelt's foreign policy. Michigan no longer will be represented in Congress by Rudolph Tenerowicz, a Red-baiter who would rather fight the Negro people than the Axis. He was licked in the Democratic primary by George C. Sadowski, second front booster, with the support of Michigan's AFL and CIO.

Yet in the same state we find the unspeakable Clare Hoffman of Michigan renominated for Congress. As open a fifth columnist as Gerald L. K. Smith, while defeated for the Republican senatorial nomination, received more than 100,000 votes. In Massachusetts Tom Eliot (Dem.), who won some fame in Congress by his bold opposition to Martin Dies, was beaten by an old-line machine politician, James M. Curley. And isolationist Senator Lodge was renominated by the Republicans, as were Reps. Joseph W. Martin and Allen T. Treadway.

In the primaries thus far from thirty-five states, there have been relatively few casualties among incumbents—and all too often the victorious "sitters" are defeatists or lukewarm toward the war. With less than six weeks to go before the November elections, it is essential to examine the reasons why. Some things are very evident—most of all, that this election, like this war, has to be fought aggressively. Candidates who have taken the initiative, speaking out for a second front, concentrating the voters' attention on win-the-war essentials, have gotten the vote. That is what Rep. Vito Marcantonio of New York did—and won three primaries. That is how Sadowski retired Tenerowicz to private life; how Michael Feighan defeated the Coughlinite sitter, Representative Sweeney, in Ohio. Where candidates have not spoken out, where they have attempted to "appease the appeasers," the electorate simply hasn't understood the big issue and too many of them have not even bothered to go to the polls. A dismal little sentence, like an epitaph, trails at the end of the news stories from various states: "Voting was light." In Massachusetts, for example, about one-fourth of the registered voters stayed away from the polls.

It is also plain that organized labor has not yet thrown its full weight behind the election of win-the-war candidates. Its unity has been valuable, in some cases extremely valuable, but in several states it has been more a formal support or opposition than the expression of a real, working campaign. And in Massachusetts there was not even formal unity in the Eleventh Congressional District, where Curley was endorsed by the Teamsters Union local. Nor, for that matter, has there been sufficient unity among progressive forces in general: thus, appeaser Representative Thill of Wisconsin was allowed to break through an opposition which was split among no less than *six candidates!*

What will happen in November? Ask, rather, what will happen before then. These are the vital weeks—when the defeatists and appeasers must be exposed, when disunity or timidity will be fatal, when no issues can be "local." It will be a hard fight and it will have to be a fast one—this is war.

## Thomas Lamont on the USSR

THOMAS W. LAMONT, chairman of the executive committee of J. P. Morgan & Co., appears in the Sunday New York *Times* of September 20 with a three-column letter which should dispel much of the nonsense spread around in this country about the dangers to America of our "anomalous" alliance with the Soviet Union. First of all the alliance, Mr. Lamont shows, is not anomalous at all; it is a logical, necessary development of the world struggle against Hitler. Moreover, this is the third great war of the last 150 years in which "we have found Russia each time fighting desperately against attempts of a dictator to become master of the continental peoples of Europe." And these "Jeremiahs" who fret about the Soviet economic system or religion in Russia, fearing that at the end of the war Soviet theories will "overwhelm us"—they "fail to realize that on all major counts the Nazis constitute the one urgent menace to the survival of the standards that they hold dear."

Mr. Lamont asks a very penetrating question of people who would like to see Russia made over in the exact economic and political mold of America before we fight on her side: why, since our own Constitution guarantees political and religious freedom, should we "begrudge to that great nation overseas the right to choose its own opinions about political economy and religion?" And he reminds the distrustful who keep harking back to the old argument that Russia "appeased Hitler" in 1939, that such things as Munich and America's Neutrality Law were go-ahead signals to the Nazis.

True, there are one or two points in Mr. Lamont's letter with which we do not see eye to eye. The Soviet-German Pact of 1939 does not require justification as an "attempt . . . to appease Germany"; we feel that events since that time have proved that it was the direct opposite, rather than comparable to Munich. And in his fine celebration of Russia's contribution to world culture, Mr. Lamont expresses the hope that the Soviet Union will "gradually work into the system of free enterprise, the capitalist system . . . releasing stores of inventive genius and energy as yet undreamed of." One might reply to this by mentioning only four names familiar to Americans: Sholokhov, Lysenko, Shostakovich, Kapitza—who have shown the world what the Soviet intellectual can and has achieved.

But these are small points beside the big one that Mr. Lamont makes: "Let us be friends with our friends and do our fighting against our enemies." What the Soviet people's friendship means to us today, in terms of their own fighting against our enemies, is the subject of many eloquent paragraphs in Mr. Lamont's letter. Not only now, he points out, but in the future, Russia is an indispensable ally against aggression. But "Today death knocks at Russia's door. It is our part to stand by her and help drive back that grim specter."



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# THE SEVEN WHO FLED

***In her new novel, "The Seventh Cross," Anna Seghers writes an exciting epic of anti-Nazi struggle in Germany. The relentless Gestapo and its elusive prey of the underground.***

It seems almost too good to be true that, overnight, the name of Anna Seghers has achieved a long-deserved prominence in this country. The appearance of *The Seventh Cross* (Little, Brown, $2.50), and its wide circulation as the Book-of-the-Month Club's October choice, introduces American readers at last to one of the most brilliant and mature novelists of our time. Few people here know the translation of Anna Seghers' *Revolt of the Fishermen,* and still fewer are acquainted with works like *Companions of the Road,* dealing with the refugee problem in the decade before 1933; *The Price on His Head,* a novel about German peasants on the eve of the Nazi conquest of Germany; *The Road Through February,* a story about Austria in the February revolt of 1934; or *The Rescue,* a novel dealing with German miners. In all her work, Anna Seghers has depicted the suffering and wrath of the common people struggling against oppression. Her new novel, overpowering in its intensity, magnificent in its human understanding, is a monument to the anti-fascist spirit, and it is difficult to see how any sensitive reader can fail to recognize a modern classic in *The Seventh Cross.*

The life of Anna Seghers, like her novel, is an epic both of escape from Nazism and of a triumphant assertion of will and courage over Nazism. As Edwin Seaver notes in the *Book-of-the-Month Club News,* she was thrice marked by the Nazis—"first for being an author, second for being a revolutionary author, and third for being Jewish." Born at Mainz in 1900, the novelist represents the best cultural traditions of pre-Hitlerite Germany. At the University of Cologne she studied the history of art, and at Heidelberg, where she prepared for her degree of Doctor of Philosophy, she mastered Chinese. In the troubled postwar years she identified herself with the people's movement for a truly democratic reconstruction of Germany. She won the Kleist prize for distinguished fiction. And then, in 1933, she was forced to flee the bookburners.

She fled to France with her husband, a Hungarian sociologist, and her two children. Later the French government, ostensibly fighting a war against the Nazis, threw her husband into the concentration camp of Le Vernet. When the Nazis marched into Paris, the writer managed to escape with her children to unoccupied France. The family was finally reunited through the efforts of the League of American Writers and the Publishers Committee. I shall not soon forget our horrified discovery that the immigration authorities would not allow Anna Seghers and her children off at Ellis Island, even on their temporary visa. The Mexican government was more hospitable, and today the novelist and her family live in Mexico City.

*The Seventh Cross* is steeped in the torment and triumph of such a life. "All of us," reads the last sentence of the book, "all of us felt how ruthlessly and fearfully outward powers could strike to the very core of man, but at the same time we felt that at the very core there was something that was unassailable and inviolable." And this is the proud theme of the story.

It is as easy to relax in this novel as it is in Nazi Germany. The iron hand of the pursuer is always at one's throat. Dealing with the escape of seven men from Westhofen Concentration Camp, and particularly the one fugitive, George Heisler, who eludes the Gestapo, *The Seventh Cross* has moments of suspense that are scarcely endurable. Our muscles, like George Heisler's, are tensed as we follow with heart-thumping excitement the relentless chase and the all but impossible escape.

But the real drama resides not so much in the physical escape as it does in the revelation of character and in the portrait of Germany which this escape provides. This is not, primarily, the story of one man's escape. In a deeper sense, it is the story of what this escape meant to the prisoners at Westhofen, to the Nazis, to the concealed anti-fascist workers. For the Nazis it was a dangerous breach in their pretense of omnipotence; for the prisoners it signified a connection with life of which they had hardly dared dream, a confirmation of hope; and for the anti-fascist underground workers it meant a specific task to do, the renewal of human contacts, the rediscovery of strength.

Anna Seghers

The action is carried forward in a series of rapid interlocking scenes which weave a wide variety of characters into a single pattern. This narrative device has suggested a comparison with Dos Passos on the book jacket. But structurally the author avoids the looseness of Dos Passos, Jules Romains, and most other panel writers. She achieves a dramatic concentration which reminds one rather of *Man's Fate* or *Native Son.* For the novel is organized in terms of a basic psychological and social principle. It is knit together by a passionate idea.

This idea is symbolized by the seven plane trees which grew in the space between Barrack III and Commander Fahrenberg's solid brick quarters at Westhofen, the space which the Nazis called "The Dancing Ground." After the prison break Fahrenberg had ordered boards to be nailed to the tree trunks at shoulder height. Each captured man was to be tied to one of the trees which at a distance looked like a cross. To nail George Heisler to the seventh cross is the obsession of Fahrenberg and the Nazi system. Fahrenberg lives in a nightmare after the prison break; his cruelty degenerates into madness. For he is faced with the loss of power, and without the power to torture men he is nothing: "To have full-grown vigorous men lined up before oneself and be permitted to break them, quickly or slowly; to see their bodies, erect only a moment ago, become four-legged; to be able to relish the sight of bold, insolent fellows turning gray and stammering with deathly fear! Some had been finished off, some driven to turning traitor; some discharged, their necks bent, their wills broken."

But things did not always go on schedule, and there was always something which "in the last analysis spoiled one's whole taste because, like a little lizard, it slipped between one's fingers, elusive, and unseizable, unkillable, invulnerable." To erase the indefinable light in Heisler's face becomes for Fahrenberg the sole purpose of his existence. All the Nazis, the smooth Lieutenant Bunsen, the savage Sergeant Zillich, the orderly Police Commander Overkamp, have unbounded power over the prisoners on the Dancing Ground; but they are unable to nail their man to the seventh cross. The Nazi types among the officials are defined with great clarity, but beneath their individual differences is the cor-



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ruption perverting every human quality.

The seven fugitives are similarly differentiated; they have not been formed in one mold. At one extreme there is Fuellgrabe, who voluntarily gives himself up to the Gestapo because there is no point in fighting the "unbeatable." In the camp Fuellgrabe had expressed resentment to his comrades at his having been drawn into the revolutionary movement; he was a man who had been unable to say no; and he wanted to be sensible at last. He was rewarded with torture and death. And at the other extreme there is a figure like Ernst Wallau, who says that if the Nazis can get depositions from a corpse, he is deader than all their dead. He is a man of steel, perhaps the strongest character in the book, and his image is always present in the mind of the escaping Heisler. With his long and hard experience in the Communist movement, Wallau has developed a firmness and clarity that inspire his comrades. One of the most powerful scenes in the book describes Wallau, beaten to a jelly, defying with superhuman heroism his Nazi inquisitors. He is unconquerable, even in the death which he has psychologically accepted as his captors try to pry open his mouth.

There are other Wallau's outside the camp, and in portraying them Anna Seghers has given the most convincing fictional portrait of the underground movement that I have read. There is Hermann, the railroad worker, and Reinhard, who holds the underground funds, and Franz Marnet, George Heisler's friend and teacher in the old days. Seeing these men in the street or at work in the Hoechst Die factory, one might say: "Another one who has changed his colors." But the old fire is there, smoldering beneath the surface, waiting for just such an opportunity as the escape of Heisler to burst into flame. It is a flame which spreads to non-active revolutionaries of former days, like Dr. Kress, the chemist, who hides George in his house, and to formerly non-political workers like Roeder, who becomes a pivot in George's escape.

If Anna Seghers has given us a grim picture of the horribly efficient Gestapo machine, she has also shown the endurance and ingenuity of people whom that machine cannot finally crush. It may terrorize a Bachmann, who informs on Wallau and then commits suicide; it may weaken the moral fibre of a Fuellgrabe; but it strengthens others in the process. This is no sentimental picture. With great shrewdness, the author has depicted moments of vacillation, as when Franz Marnet wonders if a life of simple happiness with a woman he loves wouldn't outweigh all other considerations. The author portrays the uncertainties and suspicions with which even the best anti-fascist workers must sometimes regard each other. There is a heartbreaking scene in the home of an architect who cannot decide if Paul Roeder is a Gestapo agent or actually the man whom George Heisler sent to him for help. For this really is Nazi Germany and every home is infected with fear and doubt. But George's flight becomes an instrument for renewed communication, for getting to know where each one stands, how far each has survived the Nazi terror. George himself, alternating between abject fright and quiet bravery, yielding to moments of unendurable fatigue and snapping back to an intense reality, is sustained by the knowledge that even in his utter loneliness he has plenty of good company: "It is somewhat scattered now, I know, but that doesn't matter. Heaps of company—dead and alive."

THIS is a very human story, and it is at times as tender and reverent as it is uncompromisingly tough at others. In her picture of the city-dwelling Mettenheimer family and of the rural Marnet's and Hellwig's, Anna Seghers has projected the meaning of fascism for essentially "law-abiding" people who in the pre-war days had not yet felt the full horror of the new order, but were beginning gradually to sense it. In her picture of Liesel Roeder, Greta Fiedler, and Frau Kress, she has presented with great subtlety women whose rebellious impulses will one day flare into irresistible revolt against Nazism.

Having given only the barest glimpse into this superb novel, I want to postpone further discussion until NEW MASSES readers have enjoyed it for themselves. *The Seventh Cross* raises problems in connection with the future growth of anti-fascist literature that need to be explored. But it must first be read. I believe that it will be read, and I hope very quickly, by everyone looking for a major imaginative expression of the anti-fascist spirit.

# BOOKS IN REVIEW

## America's Foreign Policy

THE RIDDLE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, *by Robert Bendiner. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.*

HOW WAR CAME: *An American White Paper from the Fall of France to Pearl Harbor, by Forrest Davis and Ernest K. Lindley. Simon & Schuster. $2.50.*

THERE is probably nothing so pertinent, so exciting as the effort to make a coherent pattern out of contemporary history. This is especially true in the field of foreign policy which, as Robert Bendiner puts it, has too long been considered the affairs of foreigners and foreign countries rather than life and death matters to ourselves. And this is what gives these two books their importance and attractiveness. The Davis-Lindley book is bound to be read because it claims to tell the story of the men and ideas that guided our diplomacy in the critical days from the battle of France until after Pearl Harbor. As for the State Department, it is one of the really mysterious rooms in the national mansion; just to look at its building is to be reminded of one of Hawthorne's tales; the skeletons in the State Department's closet have long been clanking for people to hear and the public is curious to know what goes on there.

Bendiner is a liberal, has for some time been the managing editor of the *Nation,* and acknowledges the help of the Union for Democratic Action in this work. His passions and convictions are avowedly democratic. His recital of the record proves that the State Department is out of touch with the people of this people's war. He is for a shake-up. He wants Congress to step in. He wants a governmental foreign service school to open up the Department to men other than graduates of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Georgetown. He wants trade unionists, farmers, "democrats of every stripe" to speak up so that "common sense may yet succeed to the high altar of protocol."

Bendiner has no patience with the theory that appeasement "gained us time." The fact is that it also gave the fascists time; moreover, our author is worried about the psychological damage done to the democratic cause by the "devious politics and all-too-clever distinctions" by which the State Department has sought to justify its dealings with the dictators. "If fascism in Germany is a monster which must be crushed for all time, it cannot be presented as efficient technique in Italy, as Christian knighthood in Spain, or as venerable grandeur in France."

There is an interesting chapter here on the President's relations with the Department. In the ultimate sense, says Bendiner, the President must be held accountable for the nation's policy toward the Spanish republic, for example, or toward Vichy; but how is it that Mr. Roosevelt, who saw the issue so early and saw it worldwide, in its biggest dimensions—how is it that he has tolerated such subordinates? Bendiner replies that after all the Chief Executive is not the whole government, and cannot work too independently of the men on whom he depends. Secondly, congressional politics, with reference to the South, seems to have a great deal to do with the President's relation to Cordell Hull. Third, there are personal factors, among them, in the author's words, the "well known" fact that the "President finds it next to impossible to dismiss anyone." On the other hand, says Bendiner, Mr. Roosevelt is unquestionably aware of the problem, and has tried to offset some of the worst features of the Department by a system of special emissaries, such as Donovan, Hopkins, Willkie, by a choice of ambassadors such as Dodd and Davies, and finally by the creation of newer governmental agencies such as the Rockefeller committee and especially the Board of Economic Warfare, in which Bendiner places great hopes.

WITHOUT minimizing the value of this book, which is something of a pioneer effort, it is worth noting some of its weaknesses. For one thing, it loses, rather than gains, by a rather over-ornate style. It is as though



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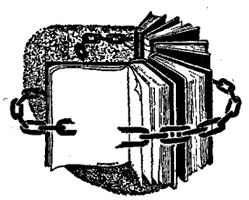

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Mr. Bendiner feared that if his language were sharper his conclusions might be considered less authoritative. It is true that this is not intended to be a study of our foreign policy as such; yet we should have liked to know something of the State Department's record in our relations with the Soviet Union, and much more than the author has on relations with Britain. Like Davis and Lindley, Bendiner rarely touches on the economic background of American policy, or the effect of the domestic picture upon it.

His chapter on the various personalities of the Department, while interesting in itself, has rather weak and often naive aspects. The chief weakness lies in the effort to assess the role of men like Welles and Berle wholly in terms of their own education, social standing, and personality rather than in terms of the historical necessities which the nation faced. For example, Bendiner cites the little known fact that Sumner Welles retired from the State Department around 1927. He then wrote a two-volume tome, *Naboth's Vineyard,* a study of San Domingo. Bendiner is quite aroused to find the roots of the Good Neighbor policy in this tome, as though the break with dollar diplomacy was somehow the result of a personal revelation in Sumner Welles' own mind. Having made this point, the author is then forced to commiserate Mr. Welles' ugly role in the Cuban crisis of 1934. Now, it is undoubtedly true that Welles, the individual, has learned much in these years and, powerful man that he is, his learning process has influenced the nation's foreign policy. But basically, the changes of the past years are to be explained by the concrete circumstances in which the country found itself; the central feature of these circumstances was the world fascist drive for the destruction of the democratic idea, the democratic state systems, their strategic positions and resources. The State Department men tried to evade the implications of the fascist offensive; they tried to bargain with it, compromise with it, fend it off. They made desperate efforts to gain time, once the fascists had gained superior strategic positions from which to attack us. The men of the State Department tried to ignore the advice of others, mislead and deny public opinion. But they were finally caught up by the inexorable consequences of their own misleadership. Changes took place because alternative lines of action were no longer possible. And the real hope that there is for our country's future lies in the fact that millions of people have become conscious of the alternatives that face us; whereas in the past a handful of men tried to ignore or evade these alternatives, there are millions who now know they cannot be evaded.

FORREST DAVIS and Ernest K. Lindley stand very much to the right of Bendiner. Theirs is the conservative story; as Malcolm Cowley puts it, "the State Department's case." Its importance lies not so much in its reliability as a history of our time, but in the fact that this is the record which very important people would have us believe. Of course, our authors deny that their book has an official okay, or is to be taken as an official document. Yet it is clear that they have had very close relations with Cordell Hull. He is their hero and they never tire of citing the piquancies of his mountaineer speech and they are apparently at full liberty to make direct quotations from confidential reports. They happen to know that Harry Hopkins was wearing a V-necked sweater as he lounged in the President's study on the afternoon of Pearl Harbor; they are certain that Winston Churchill was deep in the soapsuds of a White House bath when the President sounded him out on the term "United Nations." All this anecdotal material is not only the usual "color" stuff but is obviously intended to indicate the authenticity of what the authors are saying without giving their book a fully official character.

If it is authentic, it is not a happy story. A large part of the discussion revolves around the Vichy policy, which Davis and Lindley take great pains to defend. They insist of course that the United States was only interested in gaining time—time in which to make sure that the French fleet and French territory would not be used against us. They deny any ideological interest in the Vichy regime. And yet it is only too clear that the point at which "gaining time by appeasement" ends and sympathy for the people we are appeasing begins, is very tenuous in the minds of our authors. Weygand is one of their heroes; when he is dismissed from North Africa in November 1941, they declare that "America lost a friendly ally, the Atlantic cause a bulwark. . . ." Perhaps this is the State Department's view, but it will be news to many Americans that Weygand was our "ally," or that he contributed much to the Atlantic cause. Frenchmen will remember that he did his best to wreck that cause by undermining the republic of France.

Similarly, our authors never tire of their concern for Marshal Petain; they deny, of course, any ideological sympathy. Dealings with Petain were just a matter of gaining time, and keeping France from Hitler's clutches. Yet here and there, they give themselves away. For example, in the first days of December 1941, Butcher Goering met with Marshal Petain at Florentin-Vergigny. Davis and Lindley speculate that Goering might have told Petain of Japan's imminent attack upon us. But perhaps not, they say, for the State Department was confident that if the marshal had known he would certainly have warned Washington! What shall we say of such a judgment of Petain, after the long record of disappointments in American relations with Vichy? As Davis and Lindley tell the story, we learn that Vichy handed Syria over to Hitler in June 1941; handed Indo-China over to Japan that summer, brought Laval into full power in December; openly associated itself with Hitler in the attack upon the USSR this spring; and in every other way assisted the Germans. In other words, our policy toward France—from the point of view of gaining



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time—was a failure. Such is the record from this volume alone. Yet nowhere do the authors admit as much. And the result is that when the United States finally begins to deal with General de Gaulle, as it has since last winter, Davis and Lindley do not quite explain why this was necessary, and why, if such a policy was finally adopted, it could not have been adopted with equally beneficial results to our own security a year and a half earlier.

Much the same is true of their tale of our long negotiations with Japan. In their view, the discussions which were begun in April 1941 were intended to "baby" the Japanese along, to gain time by talk. They deny that any offers were ever made to the Japanese; it was a limited appeasement with a coldly calculated purpose. Yet at the end of the negotiations, they do describe a formula for doing business with Japan, which the State Department offered but which the Chinese would not accept. And when the whole thing is over, and the Japanese have attacked us, the authors do not pause to ask the obvious questions: Was it worthwhile? Was there no other way of dealing with Japan so that if war came, we might not have been so poorly prepared, militarily and psychologically? It is this failure to assess our Japanese policy which inspires the belief that the theory about gaining time by appeasing Japan is not enough to explain why we appeased her. The answer lies much deeper. Bendiner comes much closer to it than Davis and Lindley.

ANOTHER feature of this method of highly journalistic history-writing is its almost complete absence of scholarship—in the sense of giving evidence for one's assertions from publicly available sources. The result is that we must take the authors on their own say-so, even though the facts as we know them do not bear out their thesis. For example, they assure us that in July 1940 Sumner Welles was convinced that sooner or later, the Soviet Union was going to be attacked and that ultimately both the USA and the USSR would be fighting side by side. He therefore proceeded to befriend the Russians by opening the first of some eighteen conferences with Ambassador Oumansky. Very well. Perhaps such was Welles' intention. But it is hard to explain why the State Department issued a blistering attack on the Soviet policy when the Latvian, Esthonian, and Lithuanian peoples were finally rejoined to the Soviet Union after a twenty-five-year separation. Likewise, our authors fail to explain why, at the moment when Welles began to woo the Russians, we also cut off machine tool shipments to Russia that were admittedly made only to Russian specification. On the other hand, when the authors do have a fact that bears out a certain change in American attitude, they do not seem to know about it. In March 1941 the USSR issued a declaration denying any aggressive intentions toward Turkey and expressing the hope that the Turks would resist any aggression upon their soil. The next day Sumner Welles congratulated the USSR on this, and expressed grati-


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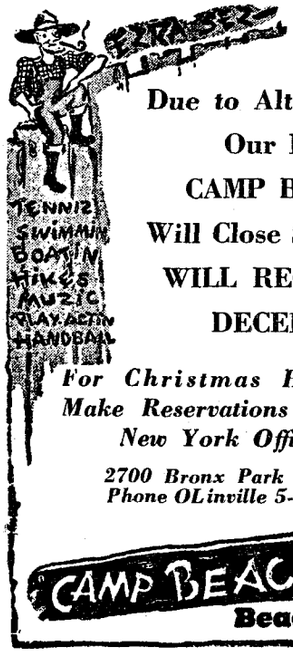


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fication that a "great power" should in such times be solicitous of the rights of weaker neighbors. Davis and Lindley leave this out altogether. Thus, in the light of their failure to explain the inconsistencies of American policy in July 1940 and their failure even to know the full record of Soviet-American relations in that critical year, all their other conjectures are left open to doubt.

There is another and prime example of the utter unreliability of this kind of writing. The authors profess to know all about Mr. Molotov's visit to Berlin in November 1940; without citing a single authoritative source they are sure they know just why the Soviet leader went to Berlin and just what happened there. They tell us—in a very intimate way—that "Hitler, offering Russia a place in the Nazi New Order with a partnership in the Middle Eastern enterprise and a shot at India, had been rebuffed; that Molotov had thereupon demanded, among other things, what amounted to control of the Dardanelles and a free hand in Rumania and Bulgaria."

*The plain fact is that the only source from which our redoubtable reporters got this information was from Hitler:* it was *his* charge in his speech of June 23, 1941, that the Soviets had designs on Rumania, Bulgaria, and the Dardanelles. Davis and Lindley know very well that this has subsequently been the stock-in-trade of Goebbels propaganda in Turkey. They know full well that a repetition of this story only helps embarrass Soviet-Turkish relations. Yet they tell it. And they give no credit to Hitler for the story.

Naturally, in the light of this kind of thing, I need hardly mention their pin-pricks at the policies of the American Communist Party. Their book makes no pretense of a real coverage of the different forces in American life in these three years. On what basis, then, other than sheer spleen, do they go out of their way to deal with subjects on which they are surely less competent than I have already shown them to be in their own field? It is cheap, garrulous, and not even smart.

Yet their book is to be read, in fact read line for line. For like its predecessor, Alsop's and Kintner's so-called *American White Paper*, it reveals—not the truth, but the half-truth that powerful people would have us believe. It is a White Paper in which there have been some careful erasures, and some able camouflage.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

## Shining Star

TELEGRAM FROM HEAVEN, *by Arnold Manoff. Dial. $2.50.*

ARNOLD MANOFF has written one of the first important American novels of this period—the period of the global war against fascism.

The chronology of his novel, however, reaches only to Pearl Harbor, and his central character is a girl, Sylvia Singer of the Bronx. This was the period after the Nazis had attacked the Soviet Union; the period when many young men were going off to camp, wondering if we would be "drawn" into the war; wondering what it was all about. Back home in the Bronx the young girls saw their boy friends leaving; the competition for men was getting more intense. Sylvia, who had neither a steady "feller" nor a job, felt the strain.

She had not had much education—only high school, and "What did it get me?" Jobs were few and hard to find; she knew stenography and shorthand, but anti-Semitism was rife and jobs were awfully scarce. The well known depression was still on for these people; it had never stopped. And, child of the depression that she was, she had grown embittered. She did not care about the war, though she hated Hitler. She did not believe what the politicians said on the radio, though she had some sort of "instinctive" faith in the President, whose photograph hung upon the wall. She used to talk to him when she was alone sometimes.

"Make a speech," she said to him one day. "Make a speech with the real truth in plain words." The portrait only smiled. "Listen," she said to him, "I'm a girl and I'm stuck." He smiles like he knows just what I mean. "Why can't I get a decent job?" This he doesn't answer. "All right we gotta help fight Hitler. All right everybody has to make sacrifices. But listen, I ain't got anything to sacrifice even. Listen, I wanna work. I'm a good stenographer. Too many stenographers? I'll do something else. I wanna work. I wanna belong. Put me on a war job. I'll learn to work a machine. Why not? I'm a very strong girl. If they'd let me be what I wanted to be I'd be flying in aeroplanes. Why not? Look at Amelia Earhart."

Nothing elegant about the girl. The boy friend, Paul, wanted to marry her before he was drafted. Why not? he said. But how could they marry? She had to support her Mom and kid brother; he had his family to support. So what could you do? Neck in hallways, in the moving pictures; what future was there in that?

Nothing elegant; only human—low-down plain and fancy human. Mom, who was ultra-respectable, decided to be a partner of Mrs. Greenstein, the woman who ran the poker games. Kid brother Alex wanted to quit school at fifteen, take out working papers, buy a clarinet, and make like Benny Goodman. Paul got sore and walked out on Sylvia. She began to feel sorry for herself, awful sorry. None of it made much sense to her; she was no politician who made speeches on the radio; she didn't know the answers.

There were millions like her, Jewish and Gentile. Little people, they're called. Forgotten men and women who don't know the score but know what they want—security, decency, a job, a "feller," a home, something to look forward to.

Mr. Manoff, in his first novel, has got these people down on paper better than Daniel Fuchs ever got them in his best book, *Homage to Blenholt.* He has got them sitting for him, to the life, better than Odets got them in his best play, *Paradise Lost.* He has got the homely



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speech, the rich lingo, the plain poetry of ordinary people. And he has got them because he is evidently close to them and is staying close to them. Fuchs has dived deeper into character at points and Odets has had a better ear at times, but Manoff is on more solid ground than either of these gifted writers. Sylvia and Paul, Sylvia's girl friend Francey, Mom and Alex and old Charlie who runs the candy store and extends credit for cigarettes and telephone calls—none of these people has the anachronistic Chekhovian traits of the Odets and Fuchs characters. They have none of the Odets or Fuchs mysticism because Manoff has a sounder political understanding of the place these people occupy in our society, and the road they must take to fight their way to security.

For Sylvia progresses from self-pity and confusion to anger and struggle. Manoff's characters, like their creator, have moved beyond the dreams of middle class life to an identification with the forces that are going to make those dreams come true.

Paul goes off to the army. Sylvia goes into a factory. When Pearl Harbor came Sylvia "learned more about the world in that one week than in all the books I ever read and all the speeches I ever heard. I learned that there was no personal future for me without a decent future for everybody. The world was that small. The war was that big! . . . The future was either them or us. There was no room in the world for both."

There is nothing mechanical about this resolution of the novel; it is the pattern of life today, and as Manoff unfolds it, it has the inevitability of life itself. It rises out of the characters onto the living page as you watch—which is what a novel should do. It represents, in terms of character, the social forces of our time, accurately, with humor, with pathos, and with love. ALVAH BESSIE.

## Brief Review

SUBMARINES, *by Herbert S. Zim. Harcourt Brace. $3.*

THIS is the story of the modern submarine, from the earliest attack on the British Navy by David Bushnell of the American Revolutionary Army, to the use of two-man submarines by the Japanese in their attack on Pearl Harbor. Line drawings serve to give simple and effective explanations of the internal combustion engine and Diesel motors. The author has used excellent official Navy photographs to illustrate the various types of submarines and life aboard the vessels. The thrilling rescue of thirty-three men of the ill-fated *Squalus* by the rescue chamber is recaptured by action shots taken at the scene of the disaster. An average submarine costs about $5,000,000 and takes about two and one-half years to build. The workers in American shipyards have cut this time down to a third of what it was. The book is well rounded out by chapters on torpedos, ventilation, and periscopes, and will serve to give the reader an idea of what makes submarines tick.


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# CLASH AT MIDWAY

***The Navy's film of the Pacific battle stirs the imagination with the heroism of our fighters. A classic documentary recorded under hot steel by Commander John Ford.***

OVER a year ago John Ford, the film director who made such major screen achievements as *The Informer,* accepted a commission in the Navy. It is our good fortune that Commander Ford happened to be stationed on Midway Island when the Japanese made the famous attack that cost them so dearly and constituted our first victory in the Pacific area.

Armed with a hand-camera, Commander Ford took up a post on a water-tower on Midway as the Japanese planes came in for the attack. But this time we were prepared for them. A major task force of our Navy knew of their arrival, and the trap was set. As a result the enemy lost four aircraft carriers (to our one, the *Yorktown*), twenty-eight other naval vessels, 300 aircraft, and thousands of men who thought they had an easy thing.

The film, which the government has released under the title *The Battle of Midway,* does not even bear the name of the famous film director. It was shot, according to the credits, by "official photographers of the United States Navy." One of them was Ford.

What is important is that *Midway* is now released in almost every moving picture house in the land. It is important that you see it. For it is the first official government film that gives the smell and taste of American battle in this war. It is tremendously exciting; you will find it difficult to bear the excitement. It shows us the faces of our anonymous American fighters. It is filmed in technicolor, supplying the dimension—if we can call it that—that is so lacking in black-and-white film, the color of life itself. It is shrewdly edited, and the commentary is terse and to the point—like a Naval officer issuing commands.

The screen awakes to a Navy PBY patrol plane flying over the deep blue of the Pacific. "Routine patrol," says the voice of the commentator, "routine patrol." There are scenes of Midway Island and the activities of its outpost; it had formerly been no more than a refueling base for the China Clipper. The enemy is sighted and the battle begins. The enemy's ships never got near enough Midway to land a single soldier; our shore and carrier-based planes found them far at sea and plastered them—for a week on end.

Here is a Flying Fortress and its crew. Sitting on the ground is a young, tanned pilot. Suddenly a voice comes onto the sound track that is startling in its commonplace American tang. "Well, land's sakes," says the woman's voice, "why that's little Johnny Jones." (Or whatever his name was.) "Don't tell me *he* has anything to do with that big airplane!" "Yes, madame," the commentator's voice replies. "He does. He's the pilot of that ship." "Well, I never heard the beat," says the native voice. "Why I know his Pa back home, he's an engineer on the railroad." We see Johnny's Pa, the engineer; we see his Ma—plain anonymous Americans whose son, the town rascal, is now a man with wings defending his faraway country with a "big airplane." The ship takes off with its bombs to seek the Japanese.

The shore installations of Midway are plastered by Japanese planes. They dive at the camera; the pompom guns chatter like the precision machines they are; the plane wavers and skitters like a shying horse, then bursts into pieces before your eyes. Gas tanks and buildings on Midway go up in vast explosions—the plainly marked hospital as well. In many places in the film the bomb concussion was so great—and so near—that the camera was knocked from Commander Ford's hands. The roar and crackle of burning gasoline is hideous; the black smoke obscures the vision. Wounded men are brought ashore; the dead are buried. You see the individual faces of individual pilots of our fighting planes—these faces will remind you of the faces you see in Soviet films, hard bitten but deeply human; they are people caught in the stress of emotion, not actors made up for the lights and camera; they have the common touch.

*The Battle of Midway* is a classic documentary of our war. For what it is—a record of the agony of battle—it is perfect. It stirs the imagination with the simple heroism of our men; it steels the determination to support them as they never even dreamed they would be supported by their folks—thousands of miles from the scream of falling bombs and hot steel. It is a record, a tribute, and a sacrament.

THE Russians are amazing, all right. Right in the midst of the bloodiest war in human history they take time out—in besieged Leningrad of all places—to make a light musical comedy called *Spring Song.* It does not particularly matter that the new film is not staggering as music or as comedy; what does matter is that the making of a light musical comedy that can relieve people, however temporarily, from the enormous strain under which they labor for victory, is regarded, and correctly, as something worthy of accomplishment.

For *Spring Song* Lenfilm has utilized a script by the late Eugene Petrov, that contains certain elements of the satire for which the writer was so justly celebrated. The satire has to do with the ancient controversy between the mutual partisans of "classical" music and "light" music—as though there were such mutually exclusive things. For, as we know, composers of light music frequently turn to serious work; and serious composers such as Beethoven, Bach, and Handel were not incapable of turning out light dancing tunes when they were in the mood.

But the way the film-makers have whipped up this controversy provides the major entertainment of the film. For the struggle almost erupts into physical violence between the respective embattled partisans of the old masters and the light fantastic. The talented daughter of the great organist Voronov falls in love with—horrors—a young composer of operettas. What's worse, she makes her musical debut from the stage of the theater, rather than from the concert platform. Papa's horror is staggering—and his battle with the daughter's singing teacher is the funniest piece in the film.

There are other representatives of various musical attitudes who are neatly lampooned by *Spring Song*: the ancient soubrette who has contempt for the culture of the masses; the composer who "talks" great symphonies, berates the ancients and the moderns, but never writes a note himself if he can steal one from someone else. And into this melee there enters the ghost of none other than Johann Sebastian Bach, to assure old Professor Voronov that people need *all* kinds of music, that there is nothing wrong with light music if it is also good light music, and that his own greatest and most frustrated ambition was to write—an operetta! The professor is convinced.

Now you must agree that as a plot this one is not a world-beater. It is even somewhat threadbare. But the film has this significance: it demonstrates that music is a mighty important thing in the world, and a particularly important thing to the people of the Soviet Union. It also demonstrates, shrewdly and with humor, that the "classical" approach is just as circumscribed as the approach of those who condemn serious music for being serious.

Even to so light a confection as *Spring Song,* the Soviet Union assigns actors worthy to carry the honors of a major production of *Hamlet;* every minor role is more than capably performed, and every individual bears the semblance of a human being we have met



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before. Notable in the cast are the Professor Voronov of Nikolai Konovalov, a fine cantankerous old gent; his daughter, Ludmila Tzelikovskaya, a lovely, natural girl with a stunning voice; the young composer Piotr Kadochnikov, and the fraudulent composer Sergei Martinson. *Spring Song*—no heavy drama—is a tonic for the times.

REVIEWING the new Ginger Rogers film, *The Major and the Minor,* after *The Battle of Midway* (though it actually came first on the program) is like turning from life itself to the grimacing of a skeleton. But it is not the contrast alone that makes the job so distasteful; the film itself is in the worst possible taste.

Ginger Rogers is one of our ablest comediennes. She has become—by dint of her own appliance and continuous casting in one vein—a sort of archetype of the American working girl (though perhaps a good deal over-glamourized and much better off than the average Kitty Foyle). Her comedy is salted by her own sense of humor and we're all for her; she should be given something to do, regularly; something better than the usual run-of-the-mill pap that passes for sophisticated comedy.

In *The Major and the Minor,* however, the authors of the malodorous *Ninotchka* give us another decomposing script. Something had to be done, one feels, to give Ginger a chance to display her versatility, her funny face, her comic voice, her fine figure, her dancing legs. What to do? Well, you can work up a "plot" that combines all these desiderata, and throw in something for good measure. That something was plain-and-fancy smut. It works thus:

The working girl, sick and tired of the big city where she can't seem to make her mark, decides to go back home to Iowa. But the fare's been raised; she hasn't got the dough. Solution? She goes to the ladies' room and hikes up her skirt, braids her hair, wipes off the makeup, makes herself a pair of half-sox, steals a balloon from another (real) child, and talks in a baby voice. This wins her a half-fare ticket.

Impossible, you say? Of course. (And silly.) But now the "fun" begins. Suspected by the conductor, she takes refuge in a compartment—occupied by an Army major. He—unlike anyone else in the world—takes her at face value. Do you begin to get the slant? All the double-meaning cracks and gags and situations that can be pulled when a man thinks a twenty-five year old gal is only twelve? And when he decides to "take care" of her because she plays sick to her stomach? And when his fiancee meets him unexpectedly at the train? And when the "child" stays at a military academy where the twelve- and fifteen-year-olds act like "little panzer divisons in sheep's clothing"? And when she must find a way—while remaining twelve years old—to win the major away from his hard-faced, selfish fiancee who wants to ruin his career?

Ten minutes of Ginger being twelve is funny; she's a clever girl. An hour and a half of it—plus all the double-plays and double-meanings which are really dirty in a way the Hays Office apparently doesn't care to balk at—is too much.

Put your hair up, Ginger, we know you. And you, Mrs. Lela Rogers, who have the interests of our Ginger at heart—please read the scripts before she plays them. And let us have another film with twelve-year-old Diana Lynn in a prominent role; she's a comer.

ALVAH BESSIE.

## Thin and Dull

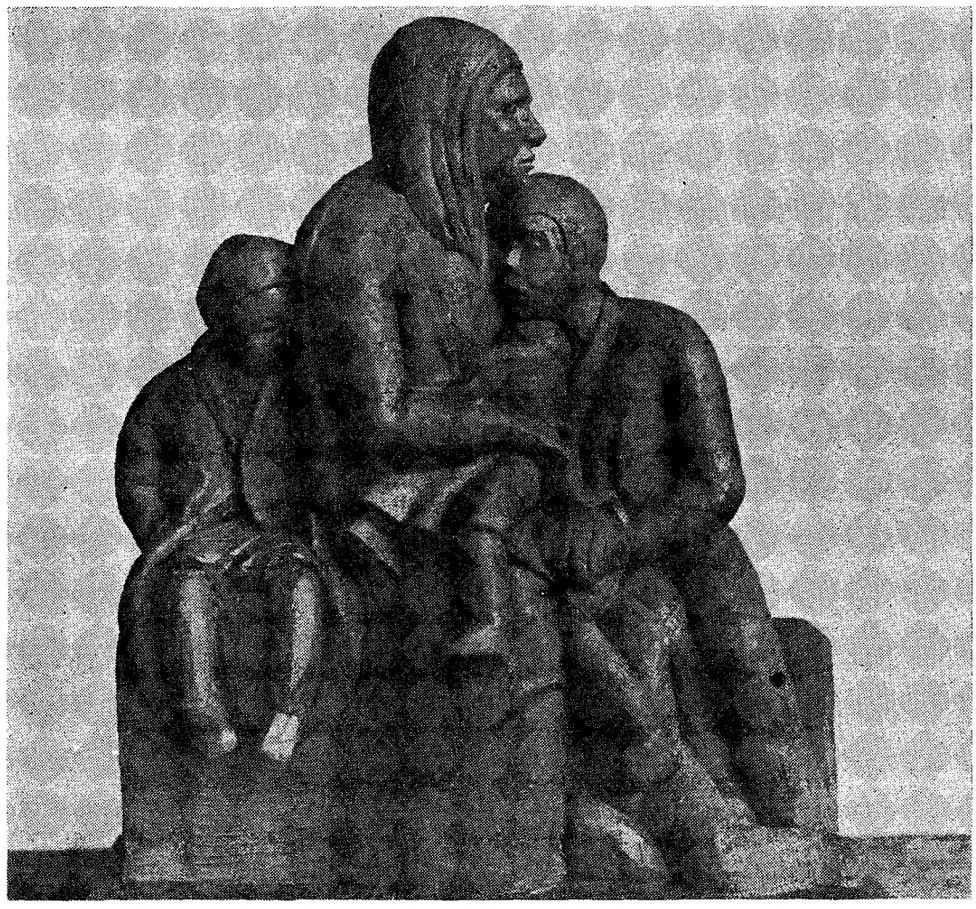
### *Emlyn Williams' new play about London and the blitz.*

EMLYN WILLIAMS is a clever and an exasperating fellow. He can knock out a whangdoodle of a thriller like *Night Must Fall;* he can act with gusto and authority; he can write a serious play like *The Corn Is Green,* which is as close to being first-rate as any play of the last several seasons. And then he can toss off a thoroughly spurious piece like his new one, *The Morning Star.*

Now it's hard, at this remove, to say why he did it. It may be that he is a superficial fellow. But when you consider *The Corn Is Green,* you find it difficult to believe. It may be that, writing in London so soon after the events he portrays in his new play—the London Blitz of 1940—he has found it impossible to focus his material and draw it into the fine, substantial pattern he made in other works. But the worst of it is that *Morning Star's* internal evidence is all against so generous an interpretation as that. For it seems patently conscious, calculated, meretriciously contrived.

The plot material is thin. He gives us a young doctor who, for reasons that seem so personal as to be almost inane, decides to abandon an obviously brilliant career in medicine with the advent of war, to become—a novelist: not even a *good* novelist, though a successful society-shocker. Not content with that, Mr. Williams yanks out a situation he used honestly and affectingly in *The Corn Is Green,* when the old doctor pleads with the recalcitrant young man to remember what he started out to do in the world, and come to his senses. (In *The Corn,* it was the schoolteacher who exhorted the young miner who was studying to teach.) He throws in, as in the earlier play, a good-for-nothing lady tramp whose only purpose in the play is to divert the doctor-hero from his work for two whole acts.

Nor is *that* all. There is the mother who loses her pilot son; the dull but honest wife who almost loses her husband; the comic Cockney servant; the faithful "batman" of the elder doctor. There is a thoroughly unconvincing "great experiment" in heart therapy that the brass hats of the medical profession don't want the youngster to perform, and which he does perform—fatally. There are the air raid sirens and the screaming bombs and ack-ack. There are the flames reflected on the walls of the battered house. There is even, in the last three



"Refugees," by Mark Friedman. On exhibition until October 15 at the Sculptors Guild Show, International Building, Rockefeller Center, New York City.



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minutes of the play, the fateful announcement of an imminent Blessed Event.

All this is duller than you could believe possible—coming from a man like Williams who has shown real compassion for his characters in the past, in addition to real understanding of them. He has fobbed us off with a third-rate confection that is calculated to pump us full of second-rate "philosophy" and bring the ready tear to the cheek. And lest anything be forgotten, there is low comedy of a rather macabre sort, that involves a dead woman in the bathroom of the blitzed London home. She is used for comic relief!

Mr. Williams will have to do better than this if he wants to convince us that he feels as much about the heroism of the average Londoner as he obviously felt about the potentialities of his young Welsh miners. For the material he handles is worthy of the efforts of any serious dramatist, and it is challenging to the literary or dramatic artist. Only it will have to be handled with more than ingenuity and wit and hokum. It will have to be handled with integrity and imagination and depth.

On this inferior work Guthrie McClintic has lavished a handsome production and actors that deserved better of the dramatist. Unlike the other reviewers, I did not care for the performance of Miss Gladys Cooper, even though it was more honest than her role. Nor for the lady tramp of Miss Wendy Barrie, who has done much finer work in films. The young doctor of Gregory Peck, making his New York debut, was fine-grained and sensitive in spite of some of the more impossible lines he was called upon to speak. The comic Cockney maid of Miss Brenda Forbes achieved a human dignity Mr. Williams did not care to lavish on his own character. In fact, Miss Forbes provides a fine idea of how the material *could* have been handled had a dramatist written with the integrity she found in herself and successfully projected. A. B.

## Songs of Freedom

*A new album of records sung by a Norwegian chorus.*

IT IS a critical custom in much favor but general disrepute to damn with faint praise. In this review we are moved to praise with many a damn. *Fighting Men of Norway* is a damn fine record album. (Keynote Album K-114. Three ten-inch records. $2.75 exclusive of tax.)

For almost two years of its existence, Keynote Recordings has been marching in militant fashion on the home front. In directing its activities to keep pace with the war, its efforts take on a commendable international flavor. This is the third album in a series giving musical display to the fighting songs of fighting men. The first was the *Songs of the Red Army*. The second album was dedicated to the oldest of the United Nations, China. The follow-up to that album is now in hand and presents six Norwegian Songs of Freedom.

Basically it is the cause a man fights for and


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not his deeds that enables him to achieve greatness. On the other hand, many a great cause has suffered by inferior handling of its cultural relations. With this album Keynote keeps faith with a great people. The album, ambitiously produced, features the Zion Norwegian Lutheran Church Chorus directed by Agnes Forder, backed up by a well balanced musical group with slightly unorthodox instrumentation appearing on the label as the Keynote Orchestra. This writer has had more occasion than not to turn a nose up and a thumb down at record companies' attempts to transcribe choral groups. Invariably a shrieking soprano or an um-pah-pahing bass have caused a sharp retreat in a state of wild alarm. In this album the Norwegian chorus know their way around the notes and attack with a unison of purpose and diction. To a large extent the music has a certain quality that one associates with the hymn book. In the Norwegian fight against Quislings the bishops have been a task force well up in front, and it seems likely that their inspiration motivates this quality.

While Norway's merchant marine and fliers march in frontal attacks on the enemy beside the soldiers of the unoccupied lands, the Norwegians at home are fighting a rear guard action in which these songs are not the least of their weapons. For music walks in where bayonets fear to tread. The informative booklet that accompanies these Norwegian fighting songs reminds us of the potency of this music and retells the brave story of the song *"Vaar Gud Han Er Saa Fast En Borg"* (A Mighty Fortress Is Our God) written by Martin Luther and sung first on the battlefields of the Thirty Years War. Once more a battle song, it was sung in front of the Trondheim Cathedral on Feb. 1, 1942, when the Gestapo denied entrance to the great church that has been a national shrine. Again on the docks of the city it exploded its musical message of hope in the ears of the gallant Norwegian teachers who were leaving on the hell ship *Skjerstad* to serve as slaves in Arctic labor camps because they refused to be traitors to their calling.

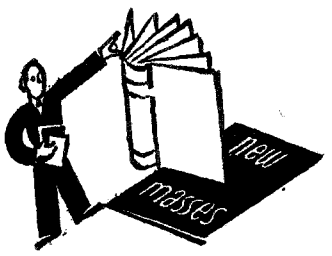
Our personal favorite of the album is *"Vi Vil Oss Et Land"* (Song of Freedom), which boasts as intriguing a melody as we've heard in a long time. An old friend, the song of the Thaelmann Brigade, turns up with new words.

*"Ja, Vi Elsker"* became the Norwegian national anthem in 1862. Eighty years later its music still resounds in the fiords and cities of Norway and its words breathe the urgency of the moment:

*As Our Sire Fought on to Triumph*
*Bitter through the Strife*
*We take up in turn the battle*
*Though it cost our life.*

This is a vivid report of Norway's fighters; vivid as an authentic news report. This is the music that makes Norwegians sing and they in turn will make the bullets whistle.

HENRY CURTIS.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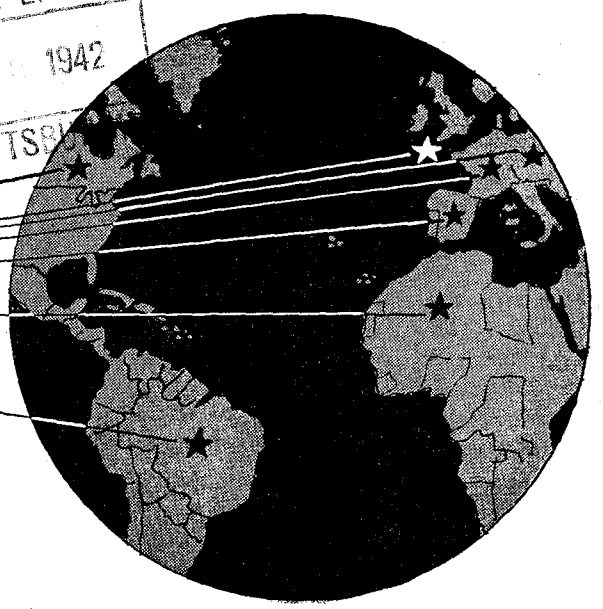

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